An Outline for the Study

— OF —

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY WISDOM and WORSHIP

FRANK SEAY

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AN OUTLINE

FOR THE STUDY OF

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY, WISDOM, AND WORSHIP

BY

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THE YOUNG PREACHERS OF SOUTHERN METHODISM

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PREFACE

THE present study is not a treatise about the Bible, but a guide to the study of the Bible itself. It presupposes a desire to know not merely certain passages and proof texts, but the Old Testament as a whole—its contents and its purpose and message in its final form. It is believed that a thorough mastery of these should precede detailed criticism of particular books or sources and questions of authorship and date. The subject matter usually covered under the title of "Introduction to the Old Testament" should be, in this view, not introductory, but a systematic inquiry of a more advanced kind. Such matters are therefore avoided, and the attempt is made to get a view of the Old Testament that will hold, whatever may be one's present or later position on questions of authorship and the like.

The outline here given aims, moreover, to be a stimulus to further study and a preparation therefor. The amount of time devoted to the mastery of the present outline might well be devoted to a single book of the Bible. Especially should the preacher's chief study be his Bible; and unless he is stirred to a more definite and detailed systematic study of particular books and phases of the Old Testament, the present work will have failed in one of its central purposes.

This book is written at the request of the College of Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church,

South, for use in the course of study for itinerant and local preachers; but it is hoped that it may be found useful as well for courses in the Old Testament in schools and colleges, for advanced classes in Sunday schools and other organizations, and also to individuals who in private study wish a general survey of the Old Testament by a first-hand study of the Old Testament material itself.

The above is adapted from the Preface to the author's "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," to which the present work is a companion volume. The two together cover the entire Old Testament, but each is a unity in itself. Gradually it is being felt by scholars that the proper place for beginning the study of the Old Testament is not with the Old Testament history, but with the prophets. It is suggested, therefore, that in college courses and the like the present volume be studied first.

The title, "An Outline for the Study of Old Testament Prophecy, Wisdom, and Worship," is not all-inclusive, but as a longer statement would be somewhat cumbersome, and as these are the phases of central interest, this title is considered best.

The author has in places followed his "Story of the Old Testament," and frequent repetitions from the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History" and from earlier sections of the present volume are to be found. Such repetition may mar the literary unity of the work; but it is demanded by the most scientific pedagogy, and the author's purpose is, of course, a pedagogical one. This purpose,

indeed, has fashioned many things in the book that to the advanced student may seem illogical and unscientific.

Acknowledgments are hereby made not only to the works quoted and referred to in the footnotes, but to all Old Testament scholars whose works the author has read. Especial thanks are due to Bishop Edwin D. Mouzon and Mrs. Frank Seay for careful reading of the manuscript and valuable suggestions, and to Mr. King Vivion for aid in the verification of references.

FRANK SEAY.

DALLAS, TEX., May 24, 1919.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

THE present outline is not for easy reading, but for study. In fact, one can hardly master any literature of a different age and clime from one's own without more than a casual reading. Bible stories are serviceable for immature minds, but the maturer student should aim to know the fundamental messages of the Bible itself; critical discussions about the Bible are in order for those who have mastered its contents, but these should be preceded by a familiarity with the Bible text itself, and to that end an outline of some kind is a valuable aid. Therefore:

1. For the best work every one should use a wide-margin Revised Version of the Bible. The American Standard rendition is, in spite of some objections frequently made to it, the most accurate English translation of the Old Testament and is therefore recommended.

2. Mark your Bibles (*a*) by writing in the margins a title for the various paragraphs. It is well to print the main heads and write the subheads. Use either the paragraph headings suggested in the textbook or your own headings. (*b*) By underscoring passages to which, for any reason, you wish to call attention for later thought. (*c*) By writing at the bottom or top of the pages other notes or questions for later study.

3. The chapters, sections, and paragraphs are arranged according to the requirements of the subject matter. The chapters are not used for references; for convenience of reference the sections are made continuous throughout the book. The section numbers and headings are in black-faced type, and the pararaphs are marked with the paragraph sign (¶). Individual classes and students have different needs and abilities, and the lessons should be arranged to suit each case.

The Biblical material is so large as to furnish almost too much ground for a single course for less advanced students. In such cases, it is suggested that the book might be divided into two shorter courses, one on the prophets and the other on the remainder of the Biblical material used in the book. A judicious instructor may find it wise to shorten his course by omitting certain portions of the study or by sketching some of the material more cursorily. This is especially so with the detail priestly prescriptions. The author has made no suggestions in this regard, because the original purpose of the study as contemplated by the course of study for young Methodist preachers involved a reading of the whole Bible, and because, further, the needs of classes vary so widely that the amount and character of such omissions should be left to the individual instructor.

4. In every Bible passage the student should aim first of all to get the contents. The outline should be taken as a guide to that end. It is not intended to summarize the Bible text, but to lead to a mastery

of the text itself. One should aim at a general view, leaving more detailed questions for later study. If, however, these questions persist in the mind, the commentaries may be consulted. Do not follow the outline slavishly. Look for other viewpoints in the Bible passages and learn to get the peculiar message of each to your own mind.

5. Wherever the textbook says "Read" or "Compare," read carefully the passage referred to. It is easy to get into the habit of omitting some because the reference seems familiar or for other reasons. By such omission the student loses much. The rereading of a familiar passage may give one a new point of view, and often the passage is not as familiar as was thought.

6. The book for convenience contains three kinds of footnotes: (*a*) Stars (*), which are used simply to give references to the books and pages from which passages are quoted; (*b*) superior figures, which are used for notes of general or pedagogical interest; and (*c*) letters, to indicate notes of a more advanced or technical kind. This scheme of footnotes enables each reader to pass over such as may not be of immediate interest, and thus obviates the tendency of frequent footnotes to break into the continuity of a passage.

7. Attention is called to the Bibliography in the back of the book for those wishing further study.

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AN OUTLINE FOR THE STUDY OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY, WISDOM, AND WORSHIP

CHAPTER I

AMOS, THE HARBINGER OF A NEW ERA AND THE PREACHER OF A GOD OF INTERNATIONAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

§ 1. The God of History and of the Nations of Earth.

Amos 1 and 2.

¶1. Who was Amos and when did he prophesy? Read Amos 1:1.

There is a local as well as a national dating. Compare the phrase "two years before the earthquake" with "before the war," "since the storm," and the like modern provincial datings. The exact dates are not known. It is sufficient for the present purpose that Amos lived and prophesied during the earlier or the middle period of the eighth century. Takoa was a wilderness country about twelve miles south of Jerusalem. While, therefore, Amos prophesied in Israel, his home was in Judah.

¶2. Amos's arraignment of Israel.

(1) The higher forms of speech and writing come from humble beginnings. The Greek drama grew out of the orgies and festivals of Dionysus, the god of wine and vegetation, and even the plays of Shakespeare are a development from this same source mediated by the dull didactic miracle plays of the

Middle Ages. The modern novel seems, strange to say, hardly more a development from the older romance and poem-story than from the habit of letter-writing. The prophecies of Amos do not form themselves on the same basis as the early Church homily and its descendant, the modern sermon, but on the basis of the ancient oracle-poem. The preaching of Amos would have been an anachronism cast in the mold of the modern sermon. The people were familiar with the primitive priestly and prophetic oracles, and this was the natural form for the message of Amos to take. Picture him at a memorable Israelite feast uttering a series of short oracles against the nations of the ancient world.

Note his diplomatic skill. He begins by condemning those his hearers wished most strongly to see punished—Israel's determined foes: Damascus, the capital of Syria; Gaza of Philistia; Tyre; Edom; Ammon; Moab. After a vague, much-debated reference to Judah, which might make a few wise heads discern the direction of his discourse, the prophet comes home with a stroke as sudden and as telling as Nathan's "Thou art the man." (2 Sam. 12:7.)

With these points in mind read Amos 1:2 to 2:8.

(2) Was the sin of the foreign nations the worship of idols? or cruelty and the violations of principles of social justice? Note that in the case of Ammon not only the cruelty but the motive of the warfare seems to be condemned. What was that motive? Is there in this any especial message for the present world situation? Note that in the case of Moab,

at least, a nation is condemned for a crime committed not against Israel but against another foreign people. In view of these facts, is Jehovah to Amos a God of the Hebrews only or of other nations also? Are his dealings with men based upon considerations of favoritism and ritual, or of morality and social justice?

(3) Does the same standard of social justice that applies to the nations apply to Israel as well? What was Israel's sin? Elijah had condemned a king for the murder of a subject and the wanton confiscation of his estate; but Amos goes far beyond this. Burn into your memory the last half of Amos 2:6. The same things that foreign nations had done to Israel and to one another, the richer and more powerful group in Israel had done to the weaker. "God condemns as much the one course as the other," is the prophet's announcement.

Some recent scholars, accentuating the social interest, have tried to make the Old Testament prophets the fathers of democracy. This is only partly the case. The Hebrew prophets seem to have acted upon a theory of the divine right of kings, just as they assume a régime of slavery and just as Abraham and Jacob practiced polygamy. They deemed the king the anointed of Jehovah. The fathers of the theoretical principles of democracy are the Greeks, not the Hebrews. Yet the heart of democracy is sympathy and pity for the poor and oppressed. This, not the Greeks, but the Hebrews championed. Democracy's heart is, perhaps, more important than its head; and Amos's

cry for social justice and pity is the heart of democracy, and is, not less than the writings of Plato, the forerunner of the utterances of Woodrow Wilson in 1917-18.

¶3. Why was Israel's sin especially heinous?

Read Amos 2:9-12.

The basis of Israel's religion in Amos's view is not merely in the fact that Jehovah is the national God, but is in requirements of gratitude for especial acts of national deliverance. This emphasis is preeminently characteristic of the prophetic viewpoint.

¶4. What will be the outcome of Israel's sin?

Read Amos 2:13-16.

Note the vigorous, terse phrases. Amos always expresses himself like a master.

¶5. Some scholars think these two chapters were never spoken, but were a written prophetic message; others think they are a collection of short oracles spoken at different times, or contain inserts of oracles composed at different times. In any case, in the form in which they now appear, they constitute an adroit and masterly presentation of a powerful and epoch-making message.

Read the two chapters through again in the light of your study.

§ 2. The Philosophy and Rationale of the Coming Punishment of Israel; The "Hear This Word" Oracles.

Amos 3 to 6.

¶1. The setting of the prophecy.

(1) Note that, while at recurring intervals in chapters 1 and 2 the phrase "Thus saith Jehovah"

occurs, in this section the phrase "Hear this word" introduces the several divisions.

Read 3:1*a*, 4:1*a*, 5:1*a*.

(2) An economic revolution had just caused the passing of the older independence of the peasantry with their small holdings and the concentration of wealth into the hands of the few with its consequent luxury.

Read Amos 3:12*b* and 15, and 5:11.

(3) The popular doctrine is that Israel is Jehovah's people: he has blessed her with prosperity and wealth.

Read 2 Kings 14:23 and 25.

"Israel only hath Jehovah known of all the families of the earth," they thought, "and Jehovah will soon crown his present blessings with a coming glorious day." To this popular doctrine Amos opposes a startling message: what is it?

Read Amos 3:2; read also 5:18.

Evidently Amos and the people followed Israel's unique relation to Jehovah with different "therefores," and they expected different kinds of days of Jehovah. This contrast explains how startling and revolutionary was his message in chapters 1 and 2.

(4) "If Jehovah is angry with Israel [as, according to the Moabite stone, Chemosh was* with Moab],

*Quoted in the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," page 147, from Mercer's "Extra Biblical Sources for Hebrew and Jewish History," page 148. For a key to the different kinds of footnote designations in this volume see the Suggestions to Teachers and Students on pages 9 to 11, paragraph 6. If you have not read these Suggestions carefully, do so now. Indeed, it

surely gladsome sacrificial feasts and many offerings would win him over," thought the people; but Amos has no such view.

Read Amos 4:4, 5 and 5:4-6.

Bethel, Gilgal, and Beersheba were sacred shrines of Israelitish worship.

¶2. The oracles.

Noting that the three main counts in Amos's indictment of Israel are (*a*) violence and oppression, (*b*) dependence on ritual and sacrifices rather than on justice and right as a means of winning God's favor, and (*c*) luxury and wantonness,

Read Amos 3 to 6.

Consider particularly (*a*) the prophet's stirring call to righteousness and religion (Amos 5:4-9 and 14, 15), (*b*) his pronouncement of judgment (3:11-15, 4:6 to 5:3, 5:16-20 and 27), (*c*) his terse quotable sentences and vivid imagery (3:2-6 and 12, 5:19, 20). Note also 4:1, of which George Adam Smith* says, "It is a cowherd's rough picture of women: a troop of kine—heavy, heedless animals, trampling in their anxiety for food upon every frail and lowly object in the way. But there is a prophet's insight into character. Not of Jezebels, or Messalinas, or Lady Macbeths is it spoken, but of the ordinary matrons of Samaria. Thoughtlessness and luxury are able to make brutes out of women of gentle nurture, with homes and a religion."

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is well to read them frequently in the course of your study.

*The Expositor's Bible, "The Twelve Prophets," Vol. 1, page 148.

§ 3. The Visions and the Controversy.

Amos 7 to 9.

¶1. The first two sections of Amos, as has been seen, contain a series of oracles introduced by the phrases "Thus saith Jehovah" and "Hear this word," respectively. Harper* calls the second section "The sermons." By this term he rightly indicates that they are a further departure than chapters 1 and 2 from the primitive poem-oracle in the direction of the sermon. The third section is a series of visions, and as such become the forerunner of another type of prophetic literature to be met later in more developed form in the Apocalypses.

Read Amos 7:1*a*, 4*a*, and 7*a*, 8:1*a*; and 9:1*a*, whose different phraseology indicates even more clearly its vision-character, the vision itself being, indeed, of a more developed sort. The vision may be the oldest form of the oracle.

Compare 1 Kings 22:17 and 19-23; Numbers 23:9, 24:3-5 and 15-17.

¶2. What are the contents of the first two visions? What is the third vision and its message? And how does it differ from the other two?

Read Amos 7:1-9.

¶3. The controversy with Amaziah, a great moment in history; compared by George Adam Smith to Luther at the Diet of Worms.**

Read Amos 7:10-17.

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*The International Critical Commentary, "Amos and Hosea," page cxxxii.

**Book previously cited, page 108.

(1) What is Amaziah's charge? Recall that Ahijah had incited a conspiracy against Rehoboam (1 Kings 11:26-31); and that Jehu was urged on by (Elijah), Elisha, and the Rechabites in a conspiracy against Ahab. Amos, however, despite Amaziah's fears, seems to be of a different sort. He is rather an interpreter of what God is doing in history than a fomenter of plots. He calls the nation to repentance and appeals to moral forces.

(2) Who was Amos? What was the nature of his call? And how does he meet Amaziah's charge? Amos, of course, does not mean that his father was not a prophet, but refers to the fact that he was not a member of a prophetic band or guild called "the sons of the prophets." Compare, for an example of the free use of the word "son" in Hebrew, Deuteronomy 34:7, where the original reads: "Moses was the son of a hundred and twenty years when he died."

¶4. The fourth vision.

Read Amos 8:1-14.

What is the vision and its interpretation? What again are the sins Amos sees in the Israelitish people? And what (note especially verse 11) are the notable features of the doom here pronounced?

¶5. The fifth vision.

Read Amos 9:1-6.

(1) Compare especially the visions of Micaiah ben-Imlah (1 Kings 22:19) and of Isaiah (Isa. 6:1-4). Note that even Amos, who attacks the popular worship so strenuously, sees Jehovah "standing by the altar."

(2) The significant passage in the chapter, and indeed in the whole book of Amos, is verse **7.** The Israelites are surfeited with the idea of the favoritism of Jehovah, the God of great deliverances, such as at the Red Sea and in the victory over Sisera. Against this idea Amos propounds severally these doctrines:

(*a*) God will punish other nations, not for partisan but for moral reasons;

(*b*) God will expect more of Israel, because she has been especially favored (Amos 3:2);

(*c*) And here (in this climax of Amos's wider outlook) God leads and cares for other peoples as well as for Israel.

Read Amos 9:7.

Keep this passage in mind in your further study.

¶ 6. The far-flung hope.

Read Amos 9:8-15.

Beyond the prophetic arraignments and the judgments predicted there arises and grows in the history of prophecy a hope for a divine event toward which history moves. The presence of this hope, as of the broader outlook referred to in the preceding paragraph, will be observed from time to time. These two aspects of prophetic thought, along with the moral emphasis previously noted, make the development of Israel's religion of prime importance in the history of humanity.

§ 4. Amos and His Times.

¶ 1. The place of Amos in the history of prophecy in Israel.

The revolt that founded the kingdom of Israel

was instigated, according to 1 Kings 11:26-40, by the prophet Ahijah on the ground that foreign worships from Sidon, Moab, and Ammon had corrupted the religion of Judah under Solomon's rule. The socio-political question of taxation and oppression Ahijah does not seen to touch, unless Jeroboam's plea to Rehohoam reflects his ideas also.

Made in a far larger mold than Ahijah was Elijah. His message to Ahab was, like that of Ahijah, a protest against foreign worships, against which he thrust the slogan "Jehovah is the God." Elijah, not less significantly championing the ancestral religion, rebukes a ruthless king for the murder and dispossession of his subject, Naboth.

The movement begun by Elijah resulted in a revolution under Elisha and Jehu and in the overthrow of the foreign Baalism.

Perhaps a landmark in prophetic development is marked by a contemporary of Elijah who never caught the imagination of Israel, but who was nevertheless a great, bold spirit, Micaiah ben-Imlah.* Standing over against the prophetic guilds, he boldly predicts Ahab's defeat before a non-Israelitish foe. He sees Jehovah as enthroned and as bemoaning the shepherdlessness of his people. Compare Mark 6:34.

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*"Ben" in Hebrew corresponds to the Scottish "Mac" and means "the son of." The English custom places the word "son" at the end instead of the beginning. It is better to transliterate rather than to translate the term, as it really forms a part of the surname; as, ben-Imlah, McKnight, McIntyre, Robertson, Williamson, etc.

Of a rather opposite point of view, it would seem, was Jonah ben-Amittai, the ardent nationalist who predicted the success of the wars of Jeroboam II., and who, like Elisha, may have seemed in his day "the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof."

Read 2 Kings 14:25.

The same narrower nationalistic viewpoint is attributed to him in the book of Jonah. This question will be considered in connection with the study of that book.

Amos, according to Amos 1:1 also a prophet of Jeroboam's reign, may have represented a reaction from the Jonah group of prophets,[a] and also a further projection of the ideals of Micaiah ben-Imlah and of Elijah. He sees Jehovah as exalted above the nations and as working out his will by punishing Israel and them, and by caring in some sense for them as he does for Israel. Amos attacks not merely a tyrannical ruler, as Elijah and ben-Imlah had done, but the whole social order. He condemns the entire people as rotten to the core. The grounds of the overhanging judgment he locates in moral conditions of the broadest social kind.

One's estimate of Amos will depend, of course, on one's view of previous Israelite and Oriental history; but under any theory, perhaps, the estimate

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[a] The book of Jonah may well be considered as an account of how the narrower prophet was through a tragic experience converted to the viewpoint of Amos. Compare § 3, ¶ 5 (2). The character of the book of Jonah, however, must be postponed until the book of Jonah is considered.

of Cornill* is not far wrong. "Amos is one of the most marvelous figures in the history of the human mind." He travels a path that all later prophecy follows.

¶2. One of the constant questions amongst students of the prophets is, "Why did Amos of Judah prophesy in Israel?" Some have answered by denying that Amos was from Judah and have tried to locate the Tekoa referred to in the northern kingdom. The facts, however, seem all against this most inherently probable assumption *a priori*, and favor the view that Amos of Judah, by a prophetic activity in the sister nation of Israel, builded out from the work of Ahijah, Elijah, Elisha, Micaiah ben-Imlah, and Jonah ben-Amittai, and became the founder of the new prophetism.

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*"The Prophets of Israel," Corkran's Translation, page 46.

CHAPTER II

HOSEA, THE PROPHET OF A FORLORN LOVE

§ 5. The Status of Opinion upon the Interpretation of Hosea.

¶1. The problem of interpreting the book of Hosea, and especially the first three chapters, is so intricate that it will be well to consider it before reading any part of the Bible text itself. These first three chapters present the story of a tragic married life—of a wife who was guilty of adultery and harlotry. But here interpreters differ. Some take the story as an allegory or parable or prophetic vision of something that did not happen in fact, but is told by the prophet to picture the true course of Israel's conduct toward Jehovah.

Most modern scholars, however, believe that these chapters recount real happenings; but here again differences arise. Some hold that Hosea married a pure young woman, who afterwards went astray and, it is usually added, broke the prophet's heart. Then, just as Jeremiah and Paul see in their respective "calls" the fulfillment of what God had in mind before their births, so Hosea sees the hand of God in his life from the beginning and feels that Jehovah was enacting in his experience a parable of Israel's apostasy to teach by a prophet's love for a wayward wife how Jehovah loves the wayward and sinful Israel.

Others think that just as Isaiah went barefoot

to call attention in a striking way to the coming Captivity, and just as Jeremiah wore a yoke as a symbol of subjection to the hated foreigner, so Hosea feels God's call to marry a woman who is already a notorious harlot in order by so unusual a course to call attention to Israel's conduct more forcibly than could be done even by the most vivid imagery in utterance or writing.

Strong arguments can be urged for any of these views, and one should not put any of them permanently aside without a careful consideration of the arguments. As, however, in such a network of possibilities the first requisite is to get some consistent view, the following one is presented. It is not in any way offered as a final solution of the problems involved, but as one that will serve until the student can by further study reach his own conclusions.*

¶2. It is customary to divide the book of Hosea more or less roughly into two sections: First, chapters 1-3, the story of the prophet's married life; and, secondly, chapters 4-14, the prophetic sermons. This is hardly adequate. The book seems to center roughly around not one but two figures—it is an ellipse, not a circle. Chapters 1-10 are dominated by the figure of a wayward wife; chapters 11-14 (or 11-13, if chapter 14 be a conclusion applicable

*For other interpretations see the pertinent passage in J. M. P. Smith's "The Prophet and His Problems," and the Commentaries of Harper, Pusey, and George Adam Smith.

to both sections) are dominated by a sort of parable of a prodigal son. The first section is in two divisions, the story (1-3) and the sermons (4-10).

¶3. It is worth noting in passing that the first section of Hosea presents a new literary form.[a] It is not a series of oracles, like the first chapters of Amos; nor a series of visions, like the last chapters; nor yet an independent discourse or discourses, like the middle section of that book. It is rather a story (be it parable or fact) and a series of sermons and applications based thereon. This form needs to be kept in mind, as it will be of interest in comparison with other books to be studied later.

§ 6. The Book and Its Message.

¶1. The first division of the first section of Hosea.

(1) Since Hosea 1:2 is in the third person and 3:1 is in the first, it is not impossible that they refer to the same event and that the editorial superscription of the book[b] is not merely verse 1, but verses 1 and 2. The superscription tells, then, not only, as in the case of Amos, the date of the prophecies, but also the central fact of the author's prophetic activity.

Read Hosea 1:1, 2.

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[a] This new literary form grows very naturally, of course, out of the prophetic oracle-vision. The prophet or seer sees a vision and then gives his interpretation. Compare Amos 7 to 9.

[b] Details cannot be given here because of the limits and character of the present work. Suffice it to say that there are difficulties under any theory.

(2) Next comes the story of Hosea's marriage to Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and of the birth of their three children.

Read Hosea 1:3-9.

Some interpreters think that by the time of the birth of the second child Hosea suspects the virtue of Gomer and that he names the child "Unpitied"—that is, "without a father's pity," in view of that suspicion. This seems unnecessary here or even after he has named the third child "No-kin-of-mine," since the prophet names his children to enforce his prophetic messages, as is shown in the naming of the first child "Jezreel." "No-kin-of-mine" would therefore merely convey the message that Jehovah renounces kinship with Israel.

Without making the situation too modern and without in any way justifying Gomer, it is not at all impossible that the beginning of the misunderstanding between Gomer and Hosea may have been when the prophet's serious mind thus named his child. One might compare the prosaic, matter-of-fact way John Wesley courted, by asking his class-meetings whether they thought the married or the single life preferable for him, while another man walks off with his sweetheart, or even how oblivious he was, after his marriage, to what some one calls "the little things that go to make up the chain of a woman's happiness." Prophets, in other words, do not always make the best husbands.

At any rate, Hosea took the whole process of rearing a family as a means of presenting his message to the nation.

(3) After his wife's fall to the very depths of shame, Hosea receives a command from Jehovah to go love her again and take her home for protection and reformation.

Read Hosea 3:1-5.

Note the first person, "Jehovah said unto *me*."

¶2. The first application.

Read Hosea 1:10 to 2:23.

Ahijah and Elijah had fought the introduction of foreign Baals into Jehovah's land. They were horrified at such a bold intrusion. Hosea attacks the more insidious local Baalim,[1] perhaps the gods of the land in Canaanitish days, who were thought by the local inhabitants to give the land its fertility. Hosea asserts that the grain and wine and oil come not from the agricultural deities but from Jehovah, and he dubs the worship of these deities adultery and even harlotry.

¶3. The first homily or exhortation based upon the marital experience of the prophet.

Read chapter 4.

The people collectively play the harlot by worshiping the Baalim and the individuals play the harlot because such practice is a part of the debased ritual of the Baal religion. They have rejected the knowledge of Jehovah, they are joined to idols. Is it possible that Gomer's fall may have been associated with these Baal cults and the religious prostitution connected with them? If so, the wrong of the Baal worship came very close home to the prophet.

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[1]Baalim is simply the Hebrew plural of Baal.

¶4. The second homily-oracle (or group of oracles). Read Hosea 5:1 to 9:9.

(1) Note that this oracle, or at least the first part of it, seems directed especially at the priests and rulers, whereas the first oracle was a "controversy" with the inhabitants of the land.

(2) The same strain as in chapter 4 recurs in 5:3*a*, 6:10, 8:9*b*-14, 9:1.

(3) Observe that the emphasis is not on tender affection, but on the instinctive jealousy of the husband: 5:14, 7:12, 8:13.

(4) The attack made on idols: 8:4-6.

(5) The great text: 6:6. Compare Amos 2:6*b*.

What other points impress you? The whole book will repay careful study. Where does Israel seek help (5:13, 7:11 and 16, 8:9*a*)?

¶5. Here follows a passage or passages built largely around the figures of grapes and the vine, and of sowing and reaping. Perhaps this might be considered a separate section of the book; but its figures are so much less significant than the figures of the wife and the son that, whether quite logical or not, the passage had better be taken as a division of one of the other sections, either as closing the first section or as beginning the second section, where the main theme is not contemporary conditions merely but the entire history of Israel.

Read Hosea 9:10 to 10:15.

¶6. So far the message of Hosea is not very different from that of Amos. Amos pictures the disobedience and rebelliousness of Israel in literal terms as a rebellion of a people against God; Hosea, under

a figure, as a rebellion of a wife against her obligation to her husband. The wife is due loyalty and "leal-love." These Gomer and Israel fail to render. It is not impossible that the figure Amos used in 5:2 may have helped Hosea to his conception.

The usual view that Hosea represents Jehovah's tender affection toward Israel under the figure of a husband's love for a wife seems to read modern ideals into ancient life. It is true there were some romances in primitive times like that of Jacob and Rachel, and even some romance in marriages like that of Isaac and Rebekah; there was always the play of the higher sexual and family instinct, and modern Christians are all too prone to underestimate the ties of affection and consideration that bind modern heathen or ancient patriarchal families together. Yet, after all has been said, the lifelong companionship of the modern man and woman as a companionship of equals is foreign to the ancient social order. Compare the lordship of the man in Abraham's sending away of Hagar; the place of the wife in the tenth commandment in Exodus and even in Deuteronomy;* the story of Alcestis among the Greeks. Nor is the crime of adultery the same sort of crime in the ancient as in the modern family: it is strongly condemned, but is of a different tone and type.

When Jehovah says to Hosea "Go, love again," he does not mean "Go, have a deep, broken-hearted affection." There is a deep sadness, of course,

*See § 33, ¶ 4.

in Hosea's life, and he loves his wayward wife; but he does not profess a broken heart of the modern type, nor does he here represent Jehovah as the broken-hearted God and Husband of Israel. Rather is he like the deeply wronged man whose jealousy is stirred and whose rights are ignored. This is primary; the deeper affection is secondary in the prophet's thought. The purpose of the command to take Gomer back is not that she may be "loved," but that she may be disciplined.

Read Hosea 3:3.

Under the figure of the marriage relation Hosea presents the only aspect of God's character consonant with the social ideals of the time, the rightful jealousy that demands "leal-love." Compare the second commandment, "a jealous God" (Ex. 20:5). Under this figure Hosea is the prophet of a forlorn "leal-love."

¶7. But Hosea is also the prophet of the great affectionate heart of God. If the lifelong companionship of love between man and wife did not exist in the ancient world, the lifelong companion-love of father and son did. Compare the relation of Abraham to Sarai with that of Abraham to Isaac; or of Jacob to Rachel even with that of Jacob and Joseph; or David's impulsive, instinctive love for Abigail or Bathsheba with his affection for Absalom. (Recall also how the David-Jonathan and Ruth-Naomi friendships surpass any friendship related between husband and wife.) Hosea knew the depths of a father's love; so when, by a change of figure, God becomes not husband but father the great

broken heart of God pours itself forth. Noting particularly verses 1, 3, and 8 in chapter 11,

Read Hosea 11 to 13.

Does the father's heart turn back here from the faithless Gomer to the poor Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah, and Lo-ammi, whose names were, in the time of his unbroken home, a parable to Israel, but who themselves got hold of the father's heartstrings so strongly?

In this representation Hosea goes beyond Amos; or, perhaps better, he rehabilitates the older Israelitish religion of Jehovah's especial love and care for Israel, in the new moralized and internationalized setting into which the stern moral demands of Amos had thrust it. It is significant that throughout Hebrew literature the most tender passages on God's love hang not around the figure of husband and wife, but around that of parent and child. Compare the Old Testament figure of an adulterous wife culminating in the New Testament representation of the Church as the bride of Christ, where the thought is less of Christ's love than of his husband-like requirement of perfect purity and beauty in his bride, with the figures in the prophets of the Divine love like a parent's to a child,* culminating in Jesus's story of the prodigal son and his bereft father.

¶8. The hope for the future: a beautiful call to repentance with a promise of restoration to Divine love and care.

Read Hosea 14.

*In addition to Hosea, note preëminently Isaiah 49:15.

CHAPTER III

MICAH OF MORESHETH IN JUDAH

§ 7. Micah.

¶ 1. Although Isaiah is an older contemporary, Micah is taken first in this study for two reasons:

(*a*) He works more completely in the spirit of Amos and Hosea than does Isaiah; and, like them, he represents the viewpoint not of the city-dweller or of one under the shadow of the Jerusalem Temple but that of the mass of country folk; and

(*b*) The treatment of the book of Isaiah at this stage would take the student so far beyond the cycle of Micah's ideas as to make a return to him decidedly like an eddy in the stream of prophetic development.

It is not the purpose of the present study to enter into critical questions of date and authorship, yet it has been thought best not to ignore entirely the chronological order where there is no material dispute and where that order makes clear and vivid the main line of prophetic development. An effort is made to make no comment in the text violently in conflict with any widely accepted viewpoint. On these principles Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi are treated first. The other prophetic books are treated in large degree topically and with little reference to chronological sequence. This course is followed without intending to deny, for example, the early date

of the books of Joel and Jonah or to assert the unity of Isaiah or Micah. These are merely questions beyond the scope of the present outline.

¶2. The spirit of Israel works in Judah also, and the spirit of Israelitish prophecy finds a voice in a prophet of Judah.

(1) Prior to the time of Isaiah and Micah, as has been seen, prophecy had its home chiefly in Northern Israel. In Micah a prophet of Judah arraigns the same social conditions in Judah that Amos found in Israel. The prosperity Israel attained under Jeroboam II. is now shared by Judah with the same results in the oppression of the poor by the rich.

Read Micah 1:1 and 9, and 2:1, 2.

This last is almost a modern anti-trust message. The wickedness they think on in their beds is not individual vices, but social oppressions.

(2) Amos had stressed, in addition to general oppression, the luxury and wantonness of the women and the ceaseless round of meaningless worship: Micah arraigns especially the unmanly mercenary prophets, priests, rulers, and judges.

Read Micah 3:1-3, 5 and 9-11.

(3) What threats does Micah make?

Read Micah 1:6, 7, 3:12, and especially 3:6, 7. The condition predicted in the last passage is to the prophets a constant horror: compare Amos 8:11.

(4) Now with these points in mind, and taking 1:8-16 as a dirge over the devastations of a conquering army, and getting the spirit and power of the prophet's message,

Read the first section of Micah, chapters 1-3.

¶3. It is sometimes said that Micah presents no new idea and marks no theological advance, but is a powerful preacher of the messages of earlier prophets. What amounts to a contrary view is offered by J. M. P. Smith:* "Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah could contemplate the fall of Samaria with some degree of equanimity, for Judah remained as the representative of Yahweh.[1] . . . Micah with unshrinking faith proclaimed Yahweh as superior to and independent of his city, his temple, and his people. It was a faith that stopped at nothing." What do you think of Smith's view?

¶4. The larger future: the passing of war and the coming of international peace.

The next passage is found in slightly varying form in both Isaiah and Micah, a fact that has given rise to the question as to which quotes the other; or if neither, as to whether both use an older oracle or an editor has inserted the passage in both places. These problems pale before the wonderful beauty of the passage, the forerunner of many similar ideals, expressing the ever-recurring hope for international peace. At no period of the world's history is this message of more interest than to-day. It is one of the noblest of prophetic oracles.

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*"The Prophet and His Problems," page 216.

[1]When the Hebrew name for God became in later Judaism too sacred to utter, the rabbis pronounced the consonants of that name with the vowels of the Hebrew word for Lord, Adhonai; which combination is rendered in English "Jehovah." The usual modern reconstruction of the ancient name is "Yahweh."

Read Micah 4:1-5 and Isaiah 2:2-4.

¶5. The next passage is a more nationalistic expression of Israel's hope of redemption.

Read Micah 4:6 to 5:1.

¶6. The prophet then turns to the coming king and the religious reformation.

Read Micah 5:2-9 and 10-15.

The expectation of a coming son of David becomes one of the corner stones of the hope for a Messiah, tying the national and the religious ideals together. The ability to look back to an ideal lovable king gave Judah an immense religious as well as political advantage over Israel and did much to give her hopes a "local habitation and a name." The character of David was, therefore, not only Judah's greatest political asset,* but one of her greatest religious assets as well.

What are the features of the reformation described in verses 10-15?

¶7. The great summary of religion: a high-water mark of Old Testament prophecy.

Read Micah 6:1-8.

What Micah 4:1-4 (with its parallel, Isaiah 2:2-4) has been as a guidepost to international idealism, this passage has been as an exposition of spiritual religion. A legalistic or ritualistic view (verse 2) makes religion a wearisome affair. Rightly viewed, however, God is not primarily one who demands but one who gives—a God of redemption (verses 4, 5);

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*Compare the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," page 167.

and as for his demands, what are they? The question of verse 7*b* is not merely rhetorical, as the widespread practice of human sacrifice testifies. It seemed hard for the Israelites to get away from the ancient idea that the greatest sacrifice of all—that of a first-born son—would please or appease God. Compare Judges 11:29-40, Psalm 106:35-39, 2 Kings 3:2, and Genesis 22:1-19, which seems to teach "that while Jehovah requires such devotion as would give up an only son for his sake, human sacrifice is to be banished from Israel."*

Furthermore, a priestly ritualism elaborated the ceremonial and stressed the number of offerings. The great answer to verse 3, as well as to verses 6 and 7, is that weary ritualistic (and legalistic) prescriptions are man-made and unnecessary. What does God require? Read again the magnificent statement, verse 8. Compare the summary of religion given by the New Testament practical wisdom, James 1:27.

¶8. Driver** notes that "it is no longer the leaders only, as in chapters 1 to 3, whose misconduct the prophet denounces; the people as a whole are addressed, and the entire nation is represented as corrupt."

Scant and deceitful weights, violence, lies, and untrustworthiness abound.

Read Micah 6:9 to 7:6.

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*Seay, "The Story of the Old Testament," page 71.

**"Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament," page 330.

¶9. But the prophet looks beyond the present. Read Micah 7:7-20.

What features are particularly worthy of note here, and what tone predominates?

§ 8. Exercise and Review.

(1) Read Amos at a sitting and write out a summary of his message and an estimate of his character.

(2) Do the same with Hosea and Micah respectively.

(3) Wherein do these three differ from one another in message and form? Write out a statement.

(4) Choose several of the greatest passages in each book and master and memorize them.

(5) Write out a sketch of ancient prophetism as so far studied.

CHAPTER IV

ISAIAH

§ 9. "The Great Arraignment."

Isaiah 1.

¶ 1. The title of the section, suggested by Ewald, has become the most popular name for the first chapter of Isaiah. The chapter has also been described as a kind of summary of Isaiah's message placed in its present position (the story of the prophet's call is in chapter 6) to serve as a sort of preface to the book.

¶ 2. After the title verse, there comes Jehovah's incomparable appeal to the heavens and the earth.

Read Isaiah 1:1-3.

Two aspects of sin are presented; in verse 2 sin is rebellion, a violation of the principles of obligation and gratitude. In verse 3 sin is held up as amazing stupidity. The former, as will be increasingly apparent, is more characteristic of the prophetic point of view.

Compare verse 2 with Hosea 11:1-3 and verse 3 with Hosea 4:1c and 6. Compare also Isaiah 5:13.

¶ 3. Jehovah's direct appeal to the people and leaders of Israel.

Read Isaiah 1:4-20.

(1) First the prophet places the desolateness of the land over against the sin of the people as effect and cause, and then he denounces the effort to appease God by ritual and offerings instead of by a reformed life.

Compare Isaiah 1:11-17 with Amos 5:4-7, and Hosea 6:6.

(2) The prophets frequently represent Jehovah as entering into some sort of controversy with his people; his communications are not mere fulminations, but pleadings and reasonings. Compare Hosea 4:1, Micah 1:2, 6:2, Isaiah 1:2 with Isaiah 1:18*a*, but do not place too much stress on the mere word "reason" in the English versions.

(3) Some scholars think the latter part of verse 18 is ironical. The people were saying, "Though our sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow," probably by reason of the multitude of sacrifices. Jehovah says, in fine scorn: "Though your sins be as scarlet, shall they be as white as snow? No; but if ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat of the good of the land." The usual interpretation, of course, makes the verse a promise of forgiveness and cleansing. Either view furnishes a great message; but even if the former view be the correct rendering of the Hebrew text, the latter certainly reflects the ideal of the New Testament and of some passages in the Psalms and the prophets. The question is, therefore, not whether the ordinary interpretation be a doctrine of the Bible, but whether it be the sense of this particular passage.

¶4. Jehovah's exclamation of wonder.

Read Isaiah 1:21-23. Compare Jesus in Matthew 8:10 and Mark 6:6.

The comparison seems to be suggested by Hosea's message. It, like Amos 5:2, accords well with the view that Gomer was a chaste woman before her

marriage, and the whole passage harmonizes with the idea that the figure of the faithless woman represents not so much the idea of breaking a husband's heart as that of rebellion against obligation to a husband.

¶5. The new figure.

(1) Amos speaks of God as a ruler or judge requiring his people to act justly; Hosea, as a husband demanding loyalty and as a father disappointed in his child. Isaiah, after using these figures in verses 10, 21, and 2, respectively, pictures the people of Israel in a sorrier plight as enemies of her God.

Read Isaiah 1:24.

(2) But this figure is followed only for a moment: the prophet turns to the purpose of Jehovah and the future of Israel.

Read Isaiah 1:25-31.

What aspects of the Israel that is to be are here dwelt upon?

¶6. Because of its typicalness as well as its import much time has been spent in this chapter. Now, after reviewing the comments of the text, read the entire chapter consecutively, getting its turns of thought, its vivid figures, and its great message.

§ 10. The Word That Isaiah the Son of Amoz Saw Concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

Isaiah 2 to 12.

¶1. Read Isaiah 2:1. Compare Isaiah 13:1, which indicates that the title of 2:1 does not extend to the thirteenth chapter.

Isaiah 2:2-4 has been studied under §7, ¶4, which see.

¶2. The sin of Judah and the day of Jehovah.

(1) In the popular mind the day of Jehovah was the time when Jehovah would, without especial regard to moral considerations, visit deliverance or blessing upon his people and seemingly complete destruction upon their enemies. The canonical prophets have a different conception.

Compare Amos 5:18-20 and Isaiah 2:12.

Noting the three sins dwelt upon in verses 6, 7, and 8 (foreign influence, trust in armies and material things rather than in Jehovah, and idolatry),

Read Isaiah 2:5-22.

(2) An ordinary soothsayer among any people might see in famine or pestilence or defeat in war the hand of an offended God. Isaiah predicts as punishment to come more than a famine—a topsy-turvy social order.

Read Isaiah 3:1 to 4:1.

What two classes are singled out? Compare Isaiah 3:13 to 4:1 with Amos 2:6-8, 4:1-3, and 3:12*b* and 15.

God, however, has an ultimate purpose to which the forces of history tend.

Read Isaiah 4:2-6. Compare §9, ¶5 (2).

¶3. The song of the vineyard and the woes.

(1) One of the literary gems of prophetic literature is the parable-song of the vineyard. Along with Jotham's fable (Judges 9:7-15) and Nathan's parable (2 Sam. 12:1-7), it stands perhaps more nearly as the forerunner in literary form of the parables of Jesus than any other Old Testament passages.

Read Isaiah 5:1-7.

(2) To what several classes of people are the woes uttered?

Read Isaiah 5:8-23.

Compare the first woe with Micah 2:1, 2 and the second (identical with the first half of the last woe, verse 22) with Proverbs 20:1, 23:29-35, 31:4, 5. Consider the want of any real moral sense condemned in verse 20.

(3) What is the specific punishment that the chapter expects to see visited upon the people?

Read Isaiah 5:13 and 24-30.

(4) Note that when Jesus in Matthew 21:33-43 uses a parable seemingly modeled after Isaiah's parable of the vineyard, he looks beyond mere punishment for Israel to the choosing of another people.

¶4. Isaiah's call.

(1) The chapter evidently presents the prophet as looking back over the years to a sacred experience of earlier days. "In the year that King Uzziah died"—it begins. George Adam Smith* suggests that it was the sinking of the glorious majesty of King Uzziah** behind the cloud of leprosy that by contrast impressed Isaiah with the more lasting majesty of a greater king.

Read Isaiah 6:1-7.

This is one of the most epochal experiences in human history, comparable almost to that of Saul

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*"Isaiah," in the Expositor's Bible, Vol. I., page 59.

**See "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," §72, ¶¶1-3.

of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. The vision of Paul, in the open country of a non-Israelitish land, meant the freeing of early Christianity from the hands of the current religious institutions and traditions; that of Isaiah, occurring in the Jerusalem Temple, meant the tying of Hebrew prophetism to the religious institutions of his day. In this respect they seem to represent opposite tendencies. Yet each perhaps represented the supreme need of spiritual religion in its own age.

Amos and Hosea stand totally outside of Israelitish ecclesiasticism, and when the nation fell there was nothing for their messages to tie to. While Isaiah, like Micah, caught up the message of Amos and Hosea and put the emphasis where they did (compare Isa. 1:11-20), he nevertheless ties prophetism to the Temple. Many modern scholars regard this as unfortunate, because the Jewish ecclesiasticism in later times engulfed and subverted prophetism. But that ecclesiasticism preserved it, none the less; and had it not been for this accomplishment of Isaiah's, the prophecies of even Amos and Hosea might not have been preserved or made effective at all. Compare how deeply Paul felt it necessary to tie to the primitive Church in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:2), and how ineffective the Renaissance spirit was in the popular mind until Luther tied it to the Church.

Perhaps it should be said that there was in Judah an ecclesiasticism that lent itself more to Isaiah's task than Amos and Hosea had at hand in the northern kingdom.

(2) Not less influential and far more significant spiritually is Isaiah's personal feeling of uncleanness in the presence of Jehovah and his personal experience of forgiven sin. Out of this feeling flows Isaiah's emphasis on the holiness of God, comparable to that of Amos on the justice of God and of Hosea on God's demand for personal loyalty and on God's love.

Compare Isaiah's new name for God: 1:4, 5:24, 10:17, 29:19 and 23.

Out of this experience enters also into prophetism another ethical viewpoint. In 1:2, as has been seen, sin is looked upon as rebellion; in 1:3 as foolishness, a viewpoint characteristic, as will appear, of the wisdom element of the Old Testament: here sin is uncleanness. This is the priestly emphasis, to which righteousness is spotlessness. It preaches the religion of a clean record.[a]

(3) The mission and message.

Read Isaiah 6:8-13 and compare Mark 4:11, 12, Matthew 13:14, 15. Compare also Exodus 10:1.

One must seek the commentaries and books on theology for the discussions of this difficult and seemingly harsh passage. But the main facts are clear.

(*a*) The bulk of the people seem hopeless (compare Hos. 4:17); but

(*b*) A remnant shall be saved (compare 6:13 and

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[a] With these three one might compare the most characteristic Greek view of sin as ugliness and of righteousness as beauty and harmony. These are the four touchstones of practical ethics. See § 2.

1:9). Out of this remnant-doctrine comes the progress of prophecy toward the appreciation of the individual and of purely spiritual and non-nationalistic values.

(4) Now read the chapter entire—one of the great passages—and get its full message.

¶5. A prophet in action.

(1) A not infrequent prophetic method seems to have been that of naming children so as to embody messages to the nation. This Hosea did, as has been seen. Isaiah adopts the same plan. One of his ideas was that of "The remnant" (See ¶4 (3) (*b*), above); this idea, as well as another, he embodied in the name of a son.

Read Isaiah 7:3, 8:1-4 and 6-18.

The margin of the Revised Version gives the translation of the names as "A remnant shall return" and "The spoil speedeth, the prey hasteth."

(2) The passage under consideration (Isaiah 7:1 to 9:7) is more like 1 Kings 17:1 to 2 Kings 2:12.* It is the story of a prophet's activity, not a series of oracles or sermons. Syria and Israel attack Judah presumably because Judah will not join them against Assyria. Ahaz turns to Assyria for help. Isaiah tells him he should turn to Jehovah for help. The prophet thus becomes a kind of Old Testament Paul with a doctrine of salvation by faith.

Read Isaiah 7:9*b*, 8:11-13.

(3) Following the method referred to in (1) above,

*See the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," § 65.

the sweeping prophetic faith is embodied in the name of a child to be born.

Read Isaiah 7:14-16 and 9:6, 7.

(4) Now, with these points in mind and getting the full significance especially of the last verse,

Read Isaiah 7:1 to 9:7.

¶6. God's warnings and ultimatum.

Read again Amos 4:6-13 and then read Isaiah 9:8 to 10:4, following it with a rereading of Isaiah 5:25-30, which some scholars think is the dislocated close of the sermon. Such dislocation seems sometimes to have happened in ancient manuscripts. Note the recurrence of the formula in 9:12, 17, and 21, 10:4, and in 5:25.

The hand "stretched out" is, of course, not in mercy, but in readiness for another blow. This last (5:25-30), if the rearrangement is correct, is the ultimatum, like Amos 4:12, 13.

What are the sins of the people that so arouse Jehovah's anger? The ethical emphasis is significant of the prophetic viewpoint.

¶7. A philosophy of history.

It is usually said that the Hebrews were not philosophers; that, for example, they assume the existence of God and do not try to prove it; and that one must go rather to the Greeks for philosophy. If philosophy be defined as metaphysics, of course the statement is true; but if a broader definition of philosophy be taken, the statement is at best one-sided. It is true that the Greeks elaborated their philosophy more formally and technically, just as did Kant and his successors in Germany as over

against Locke, Berkeley, and Hume in England, and that the Greek philosophy is a less communal and more individual product; but it is a mistake to think of the Greeks as theorizers for theory's sake. Man is a pragmatic animal, and theory is born of a practical motive. The Greeks started with the idea of the world, and therefore had to think through, as their most pressing practical problems, the grounds for believing in God and even for believing the truth of the reports of the senses. To the older Greek mind history was no problem. It just happened to be what it was. The Hebrews started from the idea of God, and that guaranteed the validity of the senses, for God would not deceive mankind.[a] Given God, however, as a starting point, the facts of history raised a problem. Thus while the Greeks developed an epistemology and a theism, the Hebrews developed a philosophy of history and a theodicy.[b] Isaiah's philosophy of history is that in history God is working out his own moral ends, that national sin brings on national disaster (compare Amos 1 and 2), and that Assyria is to be God's instrument of punishment. This, however, brings forward another problem—"Is Assyria better than Judah?" "No," says the

[a]For the working of the Greek problem upon a mind imbued with the Hebrew point of view one has but to turn to the philosophy of Descartes, who proves the validity of the senses by first proving the existence of God.

[b]The later Stoic philosophy of history and theodicy grew out of the previous philosophical conclusion as to the existence of a supreme God—that is, out of the same premise as the Hebrew theodicy and philosophy of history.

prophet: God uses her now; later he will punish her wantonness.

Read Isaiah 10:5-34.

What is Assyria's view and what the prophet's view of her power (verses 10, 13, and 15)? What will be the ultimate fates of Assyria and Israel respectively (verses 12, 20, and 21)?

¶8. Beyond the present there looms the outcome of the forces of history and of the purpose of God.

Read chapters 11 and 12.

Dwell upon the wonderful picture of the kindly character and equitable administration of the king and judge, and upon the universal peace in the world of animals and men.

Says George Adam Smith: "We, who live in countries from which wild beasts have been exterminated, cannot understand the insecurity and terror that they cause in regions where they abound." But, unlike Hercules and Theseus and Arthur, the Hebrew prophet in his kindly heart "would not have the wild beasts exterminated, but tamed."*

Note the strain of universalism in 11:10. Compare Amos 9:7 and § 3, ¶5 (2).

§ 11. Oracles upon the Nations.

Isaiah 13 to 23.

¶1. The burden of Babylon.

Read Isaiah 13 and 14, noting the following points: (*a*) The carrying out of the idea of the Divine working in history. Compare especially God's use of the

*The Expositor's Bible, "Isaiah," Vol. I., pages 189 and 190.

Medes. (*b*) The picture of the destruction, like a Chopin funeral-march (13:19-22). (*c*) The taunt-song of the restored Israel. (*d*) Two addenda on Assyria and Philistia.

¶2. The burden of Moab.

Read Isaiah 15 and 16.

Note that an older oracle is quoted (16:13, 14) and its speedy fulfillment announced.

¶3. The burden of Damascus.

Remembering that, according to chapter seven, Israel (here, as not infrequently, referred to by the name of its leading tribe as Ephraim; compare Hosea) was confederate with Syria against Judah.

Read Isaiah 17.

¶4. The burden of Ethiopia and Egypt.

The prophet turns from the more petty enemies and rivals—Philistia, Moab, Syria, Ephraim—to another of the world empires which, like Assyria and Babylon, made Israel and Judah its football.

Read chapters 18 to 20.

Note (*a*) the strange object lesson of 20:2-4. Compare the Greek philosopher Diogenes with his lantern in daytime "looking for a man." (*b*) The magnificent universalism of 19:21-25. The prophet looks beyond the bounds of a narrow nationalism to a world highway and foresees the conversion of the empires that had devastated Israel. Refer again to Amos 9:7; also to § 10, ¶8, above, especially comparing the taming as *versus* the extermination of animals with the conversion as *versus* the extermination of the people. Which is the greater conquest?

¶5. A somewhat miscellaneous group of oracles

against (1) several peoples, (2) the homeland, and (3) a faithless individual.

Read Isaiah 21 and 22.

Parts of 21:9, 11, 12, and of 22:22, 23 become catch phrases in later writers.

In passing from foreign peoples to the homefolk, there seems to be no such oratorical climax as in Amos 1 and 2 (§ 1). Yet the message is to the point. Compare 22:11, 13, and 14. Says George Buchanan Gray:

> Clear and insistent in this section is the contrast between the prophet's dark vision of destruction and the light-heartedness and recklessness of the people, who give themselves up to revelry, either because they do not perceive the issue of things, and see in a temper of alleviation a permanent relief, or because, feeling the insecurity of the present, they are determined to drown their cares in wine and feasting.*

¶6. The burden of Tyre.

From the petty nations of Western Asia and the powerful military empires, attention is turned to the "mart of the nations," in the terse phrase of the English translation. Considering verses 1-14 as a description of present ruin and the remainder as prophecy,

Read Isaiah 23.

Whitehouse remarks: "Intercourse with foreign nations was designated 'harlotry' by the prophet Hosea and those who followed him (especially Nahum and Ezekiel)."** The figure is a strange one to

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*The International Critical Commentary, "Isaiah," Vol. I., page 363.

**The New Century Bible, "Isaiah," Vol. I., page 266.

modern ears; it seems to mean that the proceeds of Tyre's revived merchandise shall enrich Israel.

§ 12. The Isaianic Apocalypse.

Isaiah 24 to 27.

¶1. In these chapters attention passes from intermediate judgments on particular nations to an ultimate world-judgment upon all and a final consummation of the processes of history. This fact brings to mind the point of view of Daniel and Revelation, rather than that of Amos and Hosea, and has made scholars denominate it an "apocalypse." Keep this name and classification in mind: it will be studied more in detail later.

Read Isaiah 24:1 and 3.

¶2. The divine events and consummation purposed by God will bring an end to sin and sorrow.

Read Isaiah 24:16*a* and 25:6, 8, and 9.

Observe the note of universalism.

¶3. Read Isaiah 26:14-19.

This is one of the most explicit references in the Old Testament to the resurrection.

¶4. Notice especially the beautiful song opening chapter 26, with its message of faith, peace, and righteousness.

Read Isaiah 26:1-7.

¶5. Now, with these considerations in mind,

Read Isaiah 24 to 27.

§ 13. The Citadel of Faith.

Isaiah 28 to 35.

¶1. One of the strongest indictments in the prophets is Isaiah's philippic against the drunkards

of Israel, evidently written before the fall of Samaria and the captivity of the North Israelites. Noting especially the climax in verse 7,

Read Isaiah 28:1-13.

What is their heedless drunken taunt (verses 9, 10)? and how does the prophet turn their words against them? Compare Isaiah 30:10 and Amos 7:12, 13 and 2:12.

¶2. God's judgments are coming, but there is a way (verse 16) of escape.

Read Isaiah 28:14-29.

¶3. There are several difficulties in chapter 29, which, as frequently in these studies, must either be reserved for later investigation or else ferreted out with the aid of the commentaries. In any case, puzzling over details should not get in the way of the main purpose, the getting of the main outlines and the understanding of the fundamental and important messages of Old Testament religion. A foolish thoroughness may be, to adapt Emerson's words on consistency, the hobgoblin of prosaic and legalistic minds.

The security of faith here is in marked contrast with the security of drunken heedlessness in the preceding chapter. Noting especially verses 4, 8, and 19,

Read Isaiah 29.

Two passages in this chapter are pressed into important service in the New Testament: (*a*) Verse 13, which is quoted by Jesus as applicable to the people of his own as well as of Isaiah's day; and (*b*) verse 16 (compare also 30:14), which becomes a

classic figure in the Old Testament and the Apocrypha and is used strikingly by Paul in Romans 9.

¶4. Should Israel rely on Egypt or Jehovah?

(1) The politicians would avert the present disaster by an alliance with Egypt; Isaiah suggests another way, reliance upon Jehovah. Noting especially 30:15-18 and 31:6-8,

Read Isaiah 30:1 to 31:9.

Get and read Byron's "Destruction of Sennacherib," a modern poet's interpretation of the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

Was Isaiah's mind, when he made his prediction, possibly dwelling upon the deliverances at the Red Sea and in the battle against Sisera (Judges 4 and 5)? In any case Jehovah was to the religious leaders of Israel fundamentally a God of Great Deliverances. He was not a mere national deity, but the God of Salvation and of a covenant based upon the salvation and protection he brought. This element is not less, but more, fundamental to prophetism than the ethical emphasis of Amos, and it is not less of an asset to religion and progress.

(2) The prophet hopes for a reconstructed social order following the divine deliverance—a righteous ruler, men of prominence who protect rather than oppress, and a public opinion that rightly discriminates in its commendations and condemnations. How modern a ring it all has in these days of the Peace Conference in Paris!

Read Isaiah 32:1-8.

¶5. The heedless security of the women is doomed to a rude shock, but there is a road to a real and

permanent security. Noting especially verses 15*a* and 17,

Read Isaiah 32:9-20.

¶6. The lowest ebb is the turn of the tide. The destroyer is now devastating, but Jehovah is ready to save.

Read Isaiah 33.

It must be remembered that this deliverance is not prompted by the mere favoritism of a national God. Jehovah is a God of righteousness, of everlasting burnings toward wickedness: he is in Fosdick's recent fine phrase, "An earnest God"—who can stand before him? Compare verses 14-16.

An especially beautiful and pathetic touch in the larger hope for a distressed and burdened world is in verse 24.

¶7. The coming day of vengeance on Edom, Israel's traditional foe.

Read Isaiah 34.

¶8. The coming age foreseen by the larger sweep of faith.

Read Isaiah 35.

Note especially ransomed nature, vegetable (verses 1, 2) and animal (verse 9), redeemed man (verses 5-8), and restored Israel (verse 10). Sickness and sin, the great enemies of the human peace, shall be banished. Joy, singing, peace, and holiness shall take their place.

¶9. Isaiah first of all reflects and repeats the messages of Amos and Hosea; but he goes beyond them, notably (1) in his emphasis on the holiness of God and on the demand for moral cleanness in

man, in which emphasis and demand he represents the incorporation of a priestly ideal into prophetic preaching; (2) in his tying his message to the temple and the organized religion of his day, though condemning that religion and its round of meaningless sacrifices even more strenuously than did Amos; (3) in his ideal of personal forgiven sin; (4) in advancing the Israelitish philosophy of history a step beyond Amos; (5) in his insistence upon the remnant idea; but, most important of all, (6) in his emphasis on faith and trust—not a blind, heedless, unmoral faith, such as Amos arraigns in the people, but a moral and moralized faith based on an idea of God as both just and loving, as Amos and Hosea had conceived of him; and as holy, too, according to Isaiah's own vision of him. Although Isaiah's union of prophetism with some of these more priestly elements is developed by Ezekiel and goes to seed in Pharisaism, Isaiah's emphasis on faith and trust passes through Ezekiel and the apocalyptic writers into the Christianity of Jesus and Paul.

§ 14. The Prophet in Action Again.

Isaiah 36 to 39.

¶1. The passage treated in the present section is parallel with 2 Kings 18:13 to 20:19, the historical aspects of which passage are treated in the companion volume to the present one, "An Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," § 73.

Sketch this passage in Kings and compare with Isaiah 36 to 39. Compare § 10, ¶ 5, especially (2).

¶2. The arguments of the Rabshakeh, or chief officer of Sennacherib, turns on three points: (*a*)

He has the same estimate of Egypt as Isaiah has. (*b*) He evidently knew of the shrines Hezekiah had surpressed in his effort to concentrate the worship in Jerusalem. Perhaps the Assyrians had found some priests and people in the already conquered territory who felt that Hezekiah had insulted and enangered Jehovah by this reform, and some prophets who hailed them as agents of Jehovah to avenge this insult; or perhaps Isaiah's prophecies of judgment upon Judah through Assyria had come to the Rabshakeh's ears. (*c*) But the Rabshakeh's more popular and strenuous appeal was to Assyria's demonstrated might and the futility of Judah's trust in her God when the gods of the other nations had proved powerless.

Read Isaiah 36:1-20 and 37:8-13.

¶3. The people in obedience to the king's orders are silent; King Hezekiah goes to prayer; Isaiah comes forward with a message of faith.

Read Isaiah 36:21 to 37:7 and 37:14-38.

Isaiah's words are in line with the messages already studied. Endeavor at this point to get a clear view of the dramatic situation and the calm faith and the quiet, dominating personality of the prophet.

¶4. The prophet and an individual king.

Read Isaiah 38:1-8.

(1) One gets here a different side of prophetic activity. Compare the careers of Elijah and Elisha, especially 2 Kings 1:1-4, 4:18-25; and for an older and more primitive parallel compare Samuel 9:5-10.

(2) Noting the hopelessness with reference to a future life,

Read Hezekiah's song in Isaiah 38:9-22.

¶5. A foreign embassy.

Read Isaiah 39.

§ 15. "The Servant of Jehovah"—A Pinnacle of Old Testament Prophecy.

Isaiah 40 to 53.

¶1. Note that the section is called "a" pinnacle, not "the" pinnacle of Old Testament prophecy. The latter designation would be in many ways justifiable, but when one thinks of Micah 6:1-6 or of Jeremiah's new-covenant religion of the heart, for example, one is rather impressed that each is greatest in its own sphere. One might just as well discuss whether Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason" or Shakespeare's "King Lear" be the greater as to debate the relative greatness of these passages. In any event no loftier heights are reached in the Old Testament than the section under consideration.

¶2. The greatness of God and the coming salvation.

(1) Two facts face the prophet:

(*a*) Israel feels that, though she has sinned, her punishment far outweighs her sin.

Read Isaiah 40:2, last clause.

(*b*) A new conqueror is arising in the East, Cyrus the Persian. Read Isaiah 41:2. A Greek might consider his coming as a mere chance turn of the wheel of fortune or the natural superiority of a new and vigorous race over a decaying one. To an Oriental it might mean that Cyrus is fostered by a

god more powerful than the gods of Babylon. Of an entirely different sort is

(2) The prophet's solution to the problem. To him, Jehovah is supreme; nations and princes are as naught to him; his people have not been forgotten; their salvation is at hand.

Noting (*a*) the tenderness and beauty of 41:1-11, with its message of comfort and its picture of Jehovah as a loving shepherd, and (*b*) the sublimity of the picture of the greatness of God as over against human forces and heathen idols,

Read Isaiah 40:1 to 41:7.

Isaiah's plea is for faith in God's workings in history, 40:31 to 41:2.

¶3. The servant of Jehovah and his mission.

(1) Israel, called first of all in Abraham and Jacob, is Jehovah's servant and need not fear. Other gods neither know the future nor control the forces of history. Jehovah is the powerful one who has raised up a new conqueror, spoken of mysteriously first as from the East, then as from the North (41:2 and 25), either because he is considered as from the Northeast or as arising in the East and coming upon Babylon from the North.

Read Isaiah 41:8-29.

(2) But Israel is not chosen to be a pampered puppet of Jehovah—the servant must serve. What is his great mission?

Read Isaiah 42:1-13.

Compare §3, ¶5 (2).

Jehovah's religion is for the world, but that it is not made world-wide as an enforced Kultur the

character of the servant guarantees. Note especially verse 3.

¶4. But alas! Jehovah's servant is himself far from fit for such a task.

(1) He is blind, unappreciative of Jehovah, and sinful.

Read Isaiah 42:18-20, 43:8 and 22-28.

(2) The nation will be forgiven and redeemed.

Read Isaiah 43:25 and 44:21-23.

(3) Israel must read carefully, too, the signs of the times.

Read Isaiah 43:10, 11, 18, and 19.

(4) Now considering these three points and noting the fresh description of the greatness of Jehovah and the nothingness of the idols,

Read Isaiah 42:14 to 44:23.

¶5. Hints have already been given concerning Cyrus, the future conqueror of Babylon and founder of the Persian world-empire, though his name has not been mentioned. The name and mission of the new conqueror are now given. Noting especially Isaiah 44:28 and 45:1 and 4-6,

Read Isaiah 44:24 to 45:25.

Prophecy has moved a long way from the popular religion of the days of Amos. It would have seemed very strange perhaps even to Amos that Jehovah not only punishes Israel through a foreign power, but restores and redeems her through a heathen prince. This deliverance of Israel is moreover only a stage in the world dominion and redemption of Jehovah.

¶6. Babylon, whose temporary rule was an expression not of human might but of God's over-

ruling purpose, shall fall. Nothing could be more timely at the present moment than this ancient interpretation of the meaning of the rise and fall of world empires. Noting especially Isaiah 47:6, 7, and comparing Isaiah 10:5-14,

Read chapters 46 and 47.

¶7. Israel, the blind and sinful, is refined and purified in the furnace of affliction.

Read Isaiah 48.

¶8. The mission referred to in chapter 42 is the mission of this new and refined Israel, or remnant of Israel destined from the beginning to be the servant of Jehovah.

Read Isaiah 49:1-6.

Compare ¶3 (2) and the reference there given: God's ultimate purpose is the salvation of the whole world.

¶9. Israel has felt forsaken, but Jehovah's love is undying and incomparable, and redemption is coming.

Read Isaiah 49:7 to 50:3.

¶10. Israel's fate has been such that despair has set in, as seen in 49:14 and 40:27. She seems to have received double for all her sins (40:2), and Babylon in showing no mercy has gone too far (47:6). But vindication is coming, and triumph and restoration.

Read Isaiah 50:4 to 52:12.

¶11. Sometimes suffering is punishment for sin; sometimes it is a refiner's fire that purges the dross: but is this all? The prophet sees further. Sometimes it is vicarious: Israel's suffering is for the world.

The prophet announces the doctrine that the stripes of one sufferer more righteous than the others may be the means of the healing of the many.

Read Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12, the climax of the servant passages and one of the pinnacles of the world's literature and of Divine Revelation. The passage stands forth in its own simple grandeur; open your soul to its fascination and depth of meaning.

¶12. Isaiah 53 comes out of the experience of the nation, and especially of the faithful ones in the nation who become the true Israel of God. Compare the career of Joseph, whom a radical commentary describes as the favorite of Yahweh;[1] "but while Jacob's favoritism gave him a special coat (compare Gen. 37:3, R. V. margin), Jehovah's favoritism brings him through slavery and prison to save many people alive."*

Read Genesis 50:20; or, better, if time allows, read the whole story of Joseph in the light of your study of Isaiah 40 to 53, considering both as expressions of the Bible doctrine of election, then

Read at a sitting Isaiah 40 to 53.

Now, considering the relative failure of even the purified remnant of Israel to fulfill the ideal of Isaiah 53, contemplate the New Testament application of the passage to Jesus in the early chapters of Acts, culminating in Acts 8.

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[1]See footnote, page 38,

*"Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," § 14, ¶ 8.

§ 16. The Remaining Prophecies of the Book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 54 to 66.

¶1. These chapters, Isaiah 54 to 66, are variously grouped and subdivided. Chapter 54 is probably a part of the preceding section, and was not considered there largely because the true climax of the "Servant of Jehovah" passages is in chapter 53. It will be well to treat these chapters topically and then to review them in the order in which they appear. The principal themes discussed are: Israel's sin as a cause of her calamities, the need of repentance and reform, and the glorious future of the people of God.

¶2. The present calamities and their cause.

(1) The shepherds "shepherd themselves," to use Jude's fine phrase; they are "blind watchmen" and shepherd dogs that cannot bark and give the alarm; they do not care for the sheep.

Read Isaiah 56:9 to 57:2.

(2) Foreign worship and idolatries are set forth under the well-known figure of adultery, and with a realism natural to ancient Orientals.

Read Isaiah 57:3-13.

(3) Violations of the Sabbath prescriptions and of the ritual law are mentioned as another element of the national sinfulness.

Read Isaiah 58:13, 14 and 65:1-7.

(4) But the prophet stresses the socially immoral sins of oppression and falsification—these, and not the inability or unwillingness of Jehovah to save, are the causes of the national abasement.

Read Isaiah 59:1-15*a*.

Here as often mark and meditate upon the more striking passages.

(5) A meditation and a prayer.

Read Isaiah 63:7 to 64:12.

Note the use of the term "Father," though not in the sense of father love; rather in the sense of originator and owner. God's past deliverance, the present desolation (63:18, 19, 64:12), and the prophetic call for patience and hope are finely expressed.

¶3. A wonderfully beautiful call to repentance and promise of pardon and restoration to Divine favor occurs in chapter 55.

Read the chapter; one might almost say, memorize it. Consider the tenderness of the nature of God as there set forth.

Read also Isaiah 57:14-21.

What is the name for God here used?

Compare Isaiah 55:5 and § 10, ¶4 (2).

¶4. The formal and false *versus* the human and true way to win God's favor, and the most characteristic mark of his Spirit's presence.

Read Isaiah 58:1-12 and 61:1-3.

These passages reflect the universal human message reënforced so characteristically by Jesus. The latter he quotes, in part, as his Messianic program. The former reflects the essence of much of his contention against the scribes of his day.

¶5. The coming deliverance and transformation.

(1) The happy restoration and future immunity.

Read Isaiah 54.

The reverse aspect of the figure used in 57:3-13

(¶2 (2), above) is here introduced. Note also the comparison with the promise to Noah and the almost rabbinical ideal of being "taught of Jehovah" (verse 13).

(2) The Sabbath and the ritual violations referred to in ¶2 (3) shall cease.

Read Isaiah 66.

Note especially verses 17 and 23.

(3) Vengeance upon an ancient foe is one aspect of oppressed Israel's hope. Heathen peoples that have oppressed Israel shall see her glory and shall atone by aiding in the restoration.

Read Isaiah 63:1-6, 59:15*b* to 60:16, and 61:4 to 62:12.

(4) Eunuchs and foreigners shall share the salvation of Jehovah.

Read Isaiah 56:1-8.

Note especially the ideal of the last part of verse 7, quoted by Jesus as one the Jews of his day had trampled upon (Mark 11:17).

(5) The whole nation by virtue merely of Abrahamic descent shall not inherit the glorious future, but whom?

Read Isaiah 65:8-16.

(6) Peace and righteousness shall dominate the coming time.

Read Isaiah 65:17-25 and 60:17-22.

Note especially 65:25 and 60:21, and consider the moral and spiritual quality of the prophetic hope.

¶6. Now, in the light of your studies by topics,

Read the entire section, Isaiah 54 to 66, at a sitting, in the order given in the Bible.

CHAPTER V

JEREMIAH

§ 17. A New Crisis and a New Prophet.

Jeremiah 1 to 6.

¶1. The age of Jeremiah.

Read Jeremiah 1:1-3.

Two facts are worthy of remark: Jeremiah's ministry begins near the time of the Great Reformation under Josiah; it covers the earlier period of Judah's national disaster and captivity.

¶2. The prophet's call and mission.

Read Jeremiah 1:4-19.

Compare Amos 7:14, 15 and Isaiah 6. Wherein does Jeremiah's call differ from the other two calls? Paul, like Jeremiah, felt himself set apart from birth (Gal. 1:15).

Paul also felt himself commissioned to a larger world than Israel. Compare Jeremiah 1:10 and Galatians 1:16.

What is the form of Jehovah's message? Compare Amos 7:7, 8:1, Isaiah 6. See §3, ¶1.

Whence does the threatened invasion come? What is Israel's chief sin (verse 16) in Jeremiah's view? Is this viewpoint more like that of Amos or of Hosea?

¶3. The national sin.

Read Jeremiah 2:1-13.

Note especially the terse, pertinent question of verse 11 and the strong and pathetic figure of verse 13. Could anything be more expressive?

¶4. Jeremiah takes up Hosea's figure and carries it to the limit in a terribly realistic picture of national apostasy.

Read Jeremiah 2:14-28.

¶5. Persistence in sin in spite of the Divine warning.

Read Jeremiah 2:29 to 3:9.

What two forms did the warnings take (3:3 and 8)? What is the result of the warnings (2:30)? Compare Amos 4:6-12.

¶6. God's plaintive call to repentance.

Read Jeremiah 3:10 to 4:4.

Compare Hosea 14. The passage is noteworthy for its signal spiritualization of religion. Not only stocks and stones (2:27), but the sacred ark itself is declared unnecessary to mediate between man and God (3:16); and the national rite of circumcision is discounted by the spiritual ideal of 4:4 in a way that may well have formed the basis of Paul's great emancipation of Christianity from the bonds of legalism and ceremony.

¶7. The Lion of the North and the forthcoming destruction.

Read Jeremiah 4:5-26 and 6:1-12 and 22-30.

¶8. Jehovah's purpose, however, is not destruction, but chastisement: he will not utterly destroy Israel.

Read Jeremiah 4:27 to 5:18.

Note particularly 4:27, and 5:10 and 18. This doctrine runs through a large part of Hebrew thought. Compare Isaiah's doctrine of the remnant. What

remarkable doctrine appears in 5:1? Compare Genesis 18:32 and Isaiah 53.

¶9. What are the several aspects of Israel's sin?

Read Jeremiah 5:19-31 and 6:13-21.

In 5:20 sin is foolishness; in 4:14 the priestly ideal of sin as uncleanness appeared; but more germane to the prophetic character is 5:23, sin as rebelliousness.

Note especially:

(*a*) 5:26 (last phrase), 5:28-31, 6:13.

(*b*) "Unshockability" as a horrible state of mind (6:15). "Alas," said a distinguished Frenchman, "for our times; there is no more hypocrisy among us." There is one thing worse than hypocrisy: shamelessness—such a brazen disregard of virtue as to take away any motive for hypocrisy.

(*c*) 6:14, with its classic and oft-quoted words, made familiar to Americans particularly by Patrick Henry's famous speech.

(*d*) Jeremiah's emphasis, like Hosea's, on religious loyalty to Jehovah (5:24). This, in fact, is the burden of the whole arraignment in chapters 1 to 6.

¶10. Now with what you have studied in mind, at a single sitting,

Read Jeremiah 1-6.

§ 18. Some Great Prophetic Messages to Judah.

Jeremiah 7 to 45, in part.

¶1. No suggested division of the book of Jeremiah has found general acceptance. The book seems a collection of incidents and prophecies without strict

logical or chronological order. One thing is obvious: while Amos or Hosea, like John the Baptist, seems a voice rather than a personality, and while Isaiah seems only slightly less so, Jeremiah is a human being with flesh and bones moving up and down the land. The various aspects of his personal life and career are as clear as the life and career of Jesus. It will be convenient to discuss first the more general prophecies of the book, and then to consider those portions bearing more directly upon the personal career and character of the prophet. This method may seem arbitrary. The answer is: So must, in the study of the book of Jeremiah, any other method or division be.

¶2. The temple worship *versus* righteousness and loyalty to Jehovah.

(1) The people of Judah were putting their trust in the sacredness of the temple—a trust perhaps increased greatly by Isaiah's prediction of the deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrian armies. "Bethel might fall, where Jeroboam's bull images of Jehovah were, but not the holy hill of Zion," thought they. Jeremiah, himself a descendant of the old priesthood of Shiloh,[1] cites the destruction of Shiloh, the ancient shrine of the ark of the covenant, and as such Jerusalem's real predecessor.

Comparing §17, ¶6,
Read Jeremiah 7:12-16.

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[1]Abiathar, scion of the house of Eli, having sided with Adonijah, was supplanted in the priesthood by Zadok, who sided with Solomon, and was banished to Anathoth. (1 Kings 1, especially verse 7, and 1 Kings 2:26, 27.)

(2) What was the sin of the people? and what will result therefrom?

Read Jeremiah 7:8-11, 17-20, and 7:29 to 8:17.

Note that there is a moral and a specifically religious aspect of their sin and that several special moral sins are mentioned. What are they? Compare Jeremiah 7:11 and Isaiah 56:7*b*, and Jesus's combination of the two passages in Mark 11:17.

What is Jeremiah's estimate of the prophetism and priesthood of his day? 8:10, 11; compare 6:13, 14 and 5:30, 31.

Read also Jeremiah 13:12-17.

(3) The human sacrifices *versus* the demand for a righteous life.

Read Jeremiah 7:21-28 and 7:1-7. Compare the messages of Amos, Hosea, and Micah, especially Micah 6:1-8.

¶3. A plea for the Old Covenant.

Read Jeremiah 9:3-22 and 11:1-17.

¶4. The greatness of God.

Read Jeremiah 10:1-22.

¶5. What is the prophet's view of man in relation to God?

Read Jeremiah 9:23, 24, 10:23-25, and 17:5-11.

Consider, according to your time and inclination, the new points of view reflected in these passages. Do the same with future ones. A good commentary will help in such a study. Too much detail in the present text would lead far beyond the scope of the work; and the student should take care not to let such detailed study becloud his general view of Old Testament prophetism.

¶6. Sin as habit rather than a series of single acts. Noting especially the oft-quoted verse 23,

Read Jeremiah 13:20-27.

¶7. Distress ahead, but beyond it deliverance.

Read Jeremiah 12:7-17, 16:10 to 17:4, and 12-27.

¶8. The new shepherds and the righteous branch of David.

Read Jeremiah 23:1-8 and 33:14-26.

Compare Isaiah 11:1-5.

¶9. God will not make a full end: Judah and Israel both shall be restored. Note particularly the recurrence of Hosea's idea of God's fatherly love in 31:3, 9, and 20, and of Amos's phrase, "The virgin of Israel." Observe also that Jeremiah, in chapter 30 as elsewhere, seems to delight in figures relating to medicine and healing. Compare Luke-Acts in the New Testament.

Read Jeremiah 30:4 to 31:28.

¶10. The higher individualism in the new era.

Read Jeremiah 31:29, 30.

¶11. The heart and the climax of the book of Jeremiah.

There is no more revolutionary step in the history of the Old Testament religion than the announcement of a covenant written not upon tables of stone but upon the heart, with its concomitant contrast between circumcision of the flesh and circumcision of the heart. Here the Hebrew prophet prepares the way for Jesus and Paul. This spiritualization of religion is to be reckoned alongside of Isaiah 53 as a pinnacle of Old Testament prophecy.

Read Jeremiah 31:31-40 and 9:25, 26; 31:31-34

might well be memorized. Futher comment is unnecessary. Drink in the greatness of this teaching.

§ 19. The Oracles Concerning the Nations.

Jeremiah 46 to 51.

¶1. Amos (1:1 to 2:3) had used the coming judgment upon the nations as an introduction to his message on the judgment about to befall Israel; and a large section of Isaiah is given to "The burden" of the nations (13 to 23). Jeremiah's activity is in the larger world, and according to 1:10 he is in an especial sense set as a prophet over the nations. These oracles predicting the destruction of neighboring nations and empires do not seem very vital to moderns; but to the ancient Hebrew it was as if a prophet should, speaking as the mouthpiece of God, have foretold the downfall of Germany to Belgium or France during the anxious months from August, 1914, to August, 1918. Read these oracles with this analogy in mind.

¶2. Ever on the horizon of Israel was the powerful empire of Egypt.

Read Jeremiah 46.

The chapter contains two oracles, the second beginning with verse 13. Compare Isaiah's oracles concerning Egypt (Isaiah 18 to 20): What was the burden of them?

¶3. Philistia was a nation of non-Semitic people especially despised by the Hebrews as "uncircumcised." The sword of Jehovah has a charge against it.

Read Jeremiah 47.

¶4. Moab, Ammon, and Edom are closer kinsmen.

Read Jeremiah 48:1 to 49:22.

Note that a restoration of these peoples is predicted in 48:47, 49:6 and 11. Consider also the terse description of the Edomite mountaineers in 49:16. What is mentioned as Moab's sin in 48:26 and 42?

¶5. In earlier days Syria, with Damascus as its capital, was a determined rival and foe; and still earlier Arab tribes were a frequent menace and scourge. It is not altogether clear why a special oracle concerning Elam should find a place here: restoration is predicted of her as of Moab and Ammon.

Read Jeremiah 49:23-39.

Note particularly the prophet's view of tribal life in verse 31.

¶6. In the days of Amos the Israelites looked for Jehovah's wrath upon the nations, but deemed themselves, as his chosen people, immune therefrom. Amos preached a different view, and used his oracles concerning the nations as an introduction to his insistence that the leaders and grandees of Israel have been guilty of the same sort of oppression and cruelty toward the poor of their own people as the neighboring nations had been guilty of toward foreign peoples. God, who acts from moral, not from partisan, motives, would punish both Israel and the nations equally. The situation changes somewhat in later times. Israel feels only too well the chastening hand of Jehovah. A series of oracles concerning the neighboring nations would, therefore, find its climax, not as with Amos in judgment upon Israel,

but in the anticipated destruction of the arch-despoiler, Babylon. Noting especially 51:7-9, 37, and 58,

Read Jeremiah 50:1 to 51:64.

Note:

(*a*) The pitiable fate of Israel (50:17). Why did the people go astray (50:6)?

(*b*) The majesty of Israel's God, supreme over the nations, carrying out his own purpose in the ongoing of history. Read in succession the following: 50:18 and 23, 51:11 and 15, 16.

The sequence of world empires is subordinate to God's will. As frequently the typical example of Jehovah's judgment is cited in 50:40.

(*c*) The redemption to come, 50:5, 34, 45.

§ 20. Prophecies Interwoven with the Biographical Woof Showing the Personal Career, Fortunes, and Method of the Prophet.

Jeremiah, *passim.*

¶1. Jeremiah speaks many oracles of judgment, but he is no mere prophet of denunciation; rather does his sympathetic heart so identify itself with the fortunes of his people that denunciation gives place to lamentation.

Read Jeremiah 8:18 to 9:2.

This is one of the sad, beautiful passages of the book: all is hopeless; the prophet is broken-hearted.

¶2. Prophets had long since been commanded to "prophesy not" (Amos 2:12, 7:12, 13), but the life of Jeremiah is sought after by his homefolk.

Read Jeremiah 11:18-23; read also 15:10-21 and 18:18-23.

What is Jehovah's assurance to the prophet?

Notice that three types of religious leaders—prophet, priest, and "wise" man—are mentioned in 18:18. Compare §9, ¶2, and ¶4 (2), last portion.

¶3. The personal experience of the prophet, linked perhaps with the experience of the nation, gives rise to the great prophetic problem.

Read Jeremiah 12:1-6.

This problem has already been discussed, especially in connection with Isaiah 53. It will be met again preëminently in the study of Job.

¶4. Quite indicative of prophetic method, whether the story be a parable or an incident enacted as a parable, is the narrative of the linen loin-cloth.

Read Jeremiah 13:1-11.

What sin of Judah is here stressed? And what is the purport of the parable?

¶5. The prophet sends a bold message to the king, presumably Jehoiachin, and the queen mother.

Read Jeremiah 13:18, 19.

Yet bolder activity is to follow.

¶6. The debate between the prophet and Jehovah.

(1) The message concerning the drought and the command not to pray for "this people."

Read Jeremiah 14:1-12. Compare 7:16, 11:14.

(2) The prophet urges an excuse for the masses of the people and calls attention to the covenant. Noting particularly verses 14 and 18*b*,

Read Jeremiah 14:13-22.

(3) Jehovah makes answer.

Read Jeremiah 15:1-9.

¶7. What is the reason for the prophet's celibacy?

Read Jeremiah 16:1-9.

Compare Paul.

¶8. The potter and his vessels. Comparing particularly 18:4 and 19:10,

Read Jeremiah 18:1-17 and 19:1-15.

What doctrine does each passage convey? Is there any difference in the two representations between the unfinished unhardened vessel in the hands of the potter and the finished one? Compare chapter 19 with 7:29-34.

How does Jeremiah 18:7-11 affect or modify the seeming determinism or "Calvinism" of the figures of the potter's vessels and their applications?

¶9. The persecuted prophet and his sad dilemma.

Read Jeremiah 20.

Meditate upon verses 7-9. Compare Paul's "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." Which seems to weigh upon the prophet the more, physical punishment or the derision and scorn of his folk?

Compare ¶2 and the references there given.

¶10. The king's inquiry of the oracle and the prophetic doctrine of surrender and submission.

Read Jeremiah 21.

Whenever there is an impending invasion, those in charge of a nation's affairs have to decide whether to resist or submit. To withstand when all the odds are untoward is sometimes supreme courage, sometimes foolhardiness. Only rarely do situations arise where victory or death are the only honorable alternatives, though merely thinking them so raises

the morale of an army or people. Jeremiah maintained the uselessness of resistance to Babylon, not chiefly because of Babylon's power, but because of his own philosophy of history. Israel's sin demanded Divine punishment. Men who counsel as Jeremiah did, as well as men who lead, on the other hand, unsuccessful revolutions, are apt to be counted traitors. What is Jeremiah's council? Compare Micaiah ben-Imlah when Ahab sent to inquire of Jehovah through him (1 Kings 22).

¶11. The prophet and the king.

Read Jeremiah 22.

What is Jeremiah's doctrine of the cause of national prosperity (verses 3, 4 and 15, 16)? Consider the boldness of the prophet's rebuke of the king. Compare 13:18. Jeremiah was frequently a sad, despairing man, but he was no whining puppet. Note especially verses 18, 19, and 24-30.

¶12. Jeremiah's battle is not only with the political but also with the popular religious leaders: he withstands and denounces both the priests and the prophets of the popular religion.

Read Jeremiah 23:9-40. Compare 14:13-19.

What specific charges does he bring against them?

¶13. The popular prophets were predicting a short captivity; "Jehovah would not forsake his people," thought they. Jeremiah calls attention to the persistence of their refusal to hearken to Jehovah and to the depth of their sin.

Read Jeremiah 25:1-11.

How long had Jeremiah been preaching to Israel at this time? What length of time did he predict

for the captivity? Do you think he meant to give exact figures, or to oppose the "short-time theory," by insisting that even the babes carried away would have time enough to live out the natural span of human life before the return?

Note that Nebuchadnezzar is called Jehovah's servant. Compare Isaiah 44:28 to 45:1.

¶14. The judgment of Babylon.

Read Jeremiah 25:12-38.

Note especially verses 29 and 31. Compare chapters 50 and 51.

¶15. Another practical problem arose out of a tendency on the part of those left in the land to think that Jehovah favored them as over against the captives. What parable does Jeremiah utter to give his view on this question? And what is that view?

Read Jeremiah 24.

¶16. The prophet in action.

(1) The opposition.

Read Jeremiah 26:1-15.

(2) The opposition is severe, but it must not be thought that Jeremiah has no following.

Read Jeremiah 26:16-19.

What older prophet is cited? What was his message? And how was it received?

¶17. Not all bold prophets escape with the lot of Micah or even of Jeremiah. What was Uriah's fate?

Read Jeremiah 26:20-24.

¶18. The prophet's vivid object lesson enforcing his idea of submission to Babylon, and the conflict with Hananiah.

Read Jeremiah 27 and 28.

Recount the narrative in your own words.

¶19. Prophetic correspondence.

Read Jeremiah 29.

What is the prophet's advice to the Babylonian exiles? What was his message to certain popular prophets? What was Shemaiah's query? And what Jeremiah's reply?

Could this correspondence have in any degree furnished Paul with his model of letter-writing?

¶20. The prophet's first book.

Read Jeremiah 30:1-3.

¶21. Why was Jeremiah imprisoned?

Read Jeremiah 32:1-5.

¶22. What purchase does Jeremiah make and what message does he mean to enforce thereby?

Read Jeremiah 32:6-44.

¶23. The message of hope from the prison walls.

Read Jeremiah 33:1-13.

¶24. What message from Jehovah does the prophet have for Zedekiah?

Read Jeremiah 34:1-5.

¶25. Relate the incident of the treachery of the slaveholders and recount the prophet's rebuke with the incident as his text.

Read Jeremiah 34:6-22.

¶26. Relate the incident concerning the Rechabites and state in your own words the lesson the prophet sought to enforce by it.

Read Jeremiah 35.

These incidents recorded in chapters 32, 34, and 35 are very instructive upon the subject of pro-

phetic method. Compare Jeremiah 27:1-4, 28:5-17, and Isaiah 20.

Notice that the lesson is one of loyalty to principles; the prophet does not indorse the Rechabite standards and has no thought here of condemning wine. The Rechabites held to the desert manner of living, deeming, it seems, agriculture and settled life a departure from the religion of Jehovah. Jeremiah urges that as they are true to their ancestral pledge, even though driven of necessity temporarily into the city, so Israel should be loyal to the will of Jehovah as they interpret that will.

¶27. Tell the story of the fate of Jeremiah's book.

Read Jeremiah 36:1-26.

¶28. How does Jeremiah meet the situation?

Read Jeremiah 36:27-32, noting particularly verses 28 and 32.

¶29. Relate the story of Jeremiah's relation to the crisis under Zedekiah and meditate upon its picture of the prophet.

Read Jeremiah 37 to 39.

¶30. What was Jeremiah's choice of residence after the catastrophe?

Read Jeremiah 40:1-6.

¶31. The new régime and the conspiracy of Ishmael.

Read Jeremiah 40:7 to 42:18.

¶32. The question of flight into Egypt.

Read Jeremiah 42:1 to 43:7.

To Jeremiah flight into Egypt meant distrust of Jehovah and probably rebellion against his chastisement. It was, furthermore, freighted with danger

to the true worship of Jehovah. Compare Isaiah upon Egypt in a somewhat different situation.

When decision to go to Egypt is reached, either Jeremiah and Baruch are forced to go, or they go along feeling their task to be rather with the people than with the land.

¶33. The prophet to the fugitives.

Read Jeremiah 43:8 to 44:30.

There were two explanations of the current disaster (44:17, 18, and 23). Josiah, the great reform king, fell in battle and the Babylonian conquest soon followed. To many it seemed as if Jehovah had proved powerless; but Jeremiah remains true to the prophetic doctrine and to himself and his God. He predicts the ruin of Egypt and of those that put their trust in Egypt.

¶34. A personal message to Baruch.

Read Jeremiah 45.

¶35. A historical appendix concerning Zedekiah and Jehoiachin.

Read Jeremiah 52.

Compare the account in 2 Kings 24 and 25.

CHAPTER VI

EZEKIEL

§ 21. Ezekiel's Arraignment of Judah.

Ezekiel 1 to 24.

¶1. The prophecies of Ezekiel are not a mere collection of oracles and incidents; they form a real book, the parts of which follow each other as chapters of one continuous treatise. Ezekiel marks, therefore, quite an advance in literary history. The style, too, is more studied and full, though not equal in literary terseness and power to some of the earlier prophetic writings. Says Driver:

> The book of Ezekiel consists of three sections, dealing with three different subjects: I. Chapters 1-24, The Approaching Fall of Jerusalem; II. Chapters 25-32, Prophecies on Foreign Nations; III. Chapters 33-48, Israel's Future Restoration. The dates of the several prophecies are in many cases stated with precision. No critical question arises in connection with the authorship of the book, the whole from beginning to end bearing unmistakably the stamp of a single mind.*

¶2. The prophet's call: a seven-day prophetic trance-vision.

Ezekiel 1:1 to 3:22.

(1) Far from his native land, a captive priest by a Babylonian stream (or canal) sees a vision and hears the call of Jehovah.

Read Ezekiel 1:1-3.

This was a significant fact to an ancient people

*"Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament," page 279.

who regarded a nation's God as attached to the homeland. It marks a triumph of the prophetic preaching of the greatness of Israel's God and of his moral as opposed to his merely national character.

(2) The first vision of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah.

Read Ezekiel 1:4-28.

One feels oneself in a new atmosphere here. The greatest distance between the prophets previously studied and Ezekiel is not that measured by the highway from Jerusalem to Babylon, but is in the realm of prophetic style and method.

Compare the calls of Amos (Amos 7:14, 15) and Jeremiah (Jer. 1:4-10). Isaiah's call is of a type midway between these and that of Ezekiel. May it be that, though Jeremiah and Ezekiel are both priests and nearly contemporaries, Isaiah and Ezekiel are more closely allied in many ways because both come from the environment of the Jerusalem temple? Compare the less developed visions of Amos in Amos 7:7-9, 8:1-3, 9:1-4. There may have been intervening prophets whose style and method were intermediate between those of Isaiah and Ezekiel. The prophecies of some of these may not have been committed to writing; the writings of others may not have come down to modern times. Whether some are extant in the Old Testament involves questions of date and authorship beyond the scope of the present study.

Isaiah's vision could be put on canvas and would make, if a highly fantastic, yet a wonderfully effective mystic picture. This vision of Ezekiel, if painted

on canvas, would appear grotesque: it is well within the realm of symbolism, where the unified picture is subordinate to the meaning of detailed aspects.[a]

Note verses 8, 17, and 18. H. P. Smith says:

Ezekiel gives a detailed description of the vision which convinced him of his prophetic misson, and in it we discover the influence of ancient Israelite tradition. What he saw was a mighty cloud interfused with fire, in which as it drew nearer he discovered four living creatures, each with four faces and four wings. Beneath them were four wheels and in the middle space an altar fire. Above was a throne, and on it a human form of supernal brightness, which he discovered to be Yahweh[1] himself. The whole is called by the prophet the glory of Yahweh (1: 28). The thundercloud, in which the earliest Israelite belief saw the chariot of Yahweh, seems to furnish the basis for the vision. The composite figures which appear in it are the cherubim which guarded the ark in the temple of Solomon. The altar fire is that of the temple itself. The originality of the prophet is to be found, not in the details of the vision, but in the use which he makes of them. The cherubim are transformed into supporters of the throne; the altar is made movable that it may accompany Yahweh in his wanderings. The wheels are to show that Yahweh is not found in a single spot, but can move freely to all quarters of the earth.*

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[a]Compare hieroglyphic writing and ancient symbolic art. When ancient art represented the artistic instinct and wanted to paint a picture, it sought a likeness to natural or ideal objects; when it wanted to say something, it took such short cuts as formed the first steps toward an alphabet, or it put together such incongruous objects as a human head and an animal to symbolize intelligence plus strength.

[1]See footnote on page 38.

*"The Religion of Israel," pages 198 and 199.

In the light of the above discussion,

Reread the first chapter of Ezekiel.

(3) What is Jehovah's description of Israel and of the prospects awaiting a true prophet to the nation?

Read Ezekiel 2:1 to 3:11.

Note especially the strange imagery of eating the book.

(4) The close of the vision and the prophet's commission.

Read Ezekiel 3:12-22.

Note the seven days (verses 15 and 16). Under what figure is Ezekiel's mission represented? and what is the form of his commission? This conception will be met again later.

¶3. The second vision and Jehovah's injunctions through it to the prophet.

Ezekiel 3:22 to 7:27.

(1) The second vision, which is not described at any length, shuts the prophet's mouth and commands a series of pantomimes and symbolic actions such as have already been seen to be characteristic of the prophets. Comparing first Isaiah 20:3, Jeremiah 28:10-13, 35:1-19,

Read Ezekiel 3:23 to 5:4.

Ezekiel 3:23 reports the fulfillment of the command of the preceding verse.

Four distinct symbolic actions are commanded: concerning the tile, the lying on one side and then the other, the food and drink, and the hair and beard cut with a sword. Describe each of these in your own words and state the lessons intended by

them. Possibly the incidents of 3:25 and 26 and 6:11 should be added to these four.

(2) Noting again 3:27,

Read Ezekiel 5:5 to 7:27.

Note the arraignment of Jerusalem (5:5-17) and of the mountains of Israel (6:1-7), the doctrine of the remnant and the national repentance (6:8-10,) and the picture of "the end" (6:11 to 7:27).

¶4. The third vision: Jehovah's departure from the temple.

Ezekiel 8 to 11.

(1) Compare 1:2 and 8:1.

During his short career the new prophet seems to have made sufficient impression to have caused his house to become somewhat of a rendezvous for leaders.

(2) What abominations are successively mentioned?

Read Ezekiel 8:5, 7-12, 14 and 16.

(*a*) The digging through of 8:7-9 "implies that the cult was secret; not that the worshipers feared punishment on discovery, but because the mystery worship is only for the initiated."* Tammuz of 8:14 "is the Babylonian Duzu, from Dumu-zu; the name is not Semitic, and is therefore attributed to the supposed older or Sumerian element in Babylonian life. He is the god of spring vegetation, who dies (goes down to Hades) and revives again with the returning summer (July was the month of the

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*Lofthouse, "Ezekiel," The New Century Bible, pages 97 and 98.

festival). Ishtar, the goddess of fertility, goes down to Hades to seek for him. His worship is as familiar to us as that of Adonis, celebrated in later times with especial pomp in Syria. The story of Venus and Adonis is simply the Oriental nature-myth in a Western dress; in Egypt it appears under the form of the Osiris cult (see J. G. Frazer, 'Golden Bough,' I., 287, and 'Adonis,' 'Attis,' 'Osiris')."*

(*b*) Note the successive steps in Jehovah's departure.

Read Ezekiel 9:3, 10:4 and 18, 11:23.

(*c*) With these points in mind, and noting further the individualism of 9:4, the stern coolness of the "man with the inkhorn," and the death of Pelatiah,

Read Ezekiel 8:1 to 11:25.

(3) The basis of the prophecy just read is the foreign "abominations" imported into Jerusalem, on the one hand, and on the other a feeling amongst those Israelites not taken into captivity that they were divinely favored as over against the captives. Ezekiel's doctrine is that Jehovah leaves the polluted temple and himself becomes a sanctuary in a foreign land. The possibilities of this view for the spiritualization of religion are obvious.

Reread 11:14-25, noting especially verses 19 and 20. Compare Jeremiah 31:31-34 and §18, ¶11. The attempt to make a righteous people and an ideal social order by law and punishment fails. (Compare God's successive efforts at redemption of the race

*Book last cited, page 99.

through the election of Noah and Abraham.*) God now proposes to regenerate the people, to change their natures.

¶5. The sermons of judgment.

Ezekiel 12 to 24.

(1) In these chapters the prophet turns from the high-flown vision style to the prophetic sermon and oracle met with in the prophets previously studied. He still characteristically retains much symbolic action and parable.

(2) The symbolic "moving-day."

Read Ezekiel 12:1-20.

(3) What was the popular feeling about the prophet's visions? and what in turn did Ezekiel think of the popular prophets and prophetesses? Noting especially 13:10,

Read Ezekiel 12:21 to 13:23.

(4) What is Jehovah's answer to the attempted inquiry of the divine oracle?

Read Ezekiel 14.

Compare the individualism of verses 14 and 20 with Jeremiah 5:1, Genesis 18:22-33, and Isaiah 53.

Note in verse 21 the four great enemies of primitive social welfare.

(5) What is the purport of Ezekiel's parable of the vine?

Read Ezekiel 15.

(6) Tell the story of Ezekiel's parable of the foundling-adulteress.

Read Ezekiel 16.

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*See the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," §§ 5, 6, and 7, and pages 194-199.

Recall how this figure of Hosea's runs through the prophetic writings. Notice that Ezekiel carries the rebelliousness of Israel back to the beginning; he does not idealize the distant past nor speak as if recent years marked a forsaking of ancient perfect ways. He also arraigns Judah as worse than Israel or Sodom. Note the extreme irony of verse 33.

What of the future (verses 42 and 53-63)? Note that it is not Judah alone that is to be restored.

(7) The parable or riddle of the eagles and the cedar. What is its purport?

Read Ezekiel 17.

This parable might be compared with Isaiah 5:1-7. Isaiah's is a more natural, simple parable; Ezekiel's is a fanciful fable and allegory. Isaiah's attacks social wrong; Ezekiel's has a more theological interest.

(8) A classic expression of ancient individualism. Noting the implication of verse 3,

Read Ezekiel 18.

In what way did the doubters question God's dealing with men (verses 25 and 2)? Note Ezekiel's summary on moral conduct in verses 5-9. Note also the wonderful plea for penitence and its reflection of the tenderer side of Ezekiel's conception of God.

It is easy to misunderstand the prophetic relation to the individual and individualism. When Amos draws a line between the oppressed and the oppressor within the nation and when he condemns specifically the wealthy women, individualism is already born. Nor is it absent from his successors. On the other hand, it is easy to overemphasize the individualism

of Jeremiah and Ezekiel as expressed here and in Ezekiel 14 and Jeremiah 31:29. These prophets think of the individual as a member through his righteousness of the ideal community that God is trying to set up in the world as the goal of the forces of history. Furthermore, Ezekiel does not neglect the ideas of the taint in the blood and racial solidarity. Here perhaps he is rather a preacher dealing with a particular problem than a systematic theologian presenting a complete theodicy. The passage marks an era, nevertheless, in the advance from the earlier societistic[a] viewpoint to the higher individualism within the divine social order. Compare (4), above.

(9) The parables of the lioness and her whelps and of the vine.

Read Ezekiel 19.

The two whelps seem to have been the royal half-brothers, Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:31-36). The lioness is either the queen mother or the nation.

(10) The elder's inquiry and Ezekiel's wholesale arraignment of Israel's past and present.

Read Ezekiel 20 to 23.

Chapters 20 and 23 arraign the past; the former more literally, the latter in a comprehensive parable, Orientally realistic and scathing, carrying out Hosea's

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[a] The word "socialistic" has unfortunately been captured by upholders of certain economic and governmental creeds. The best substitutes for what "socialistic" and "socialism" ought to mean are "societistic" and "societism."

figure of an adulterous wife. Ezekiel's extensive use of parable reminds one of Jesus, but how different are the simple literary gems Jesus creates!

The blood of children offered to idols stirs Ezekiel's soul much more than that shed in rapine. He emphasizes, too, the violations of the Sabbath and ritual and the pollution of the sanctuary; but he does not overlook socio-moral transgressions. Compare 22:27.

Chapters 21 and 22 deal more with contemporary conditions. In 22:23-31 Ezekiel does not hesitate to arraign prophet, priest, and prince. True to the spirit of Jeremiah and the other prophets, and of Jesus later, he is no craven.

An interesting touch of ancient local color is the Babylonian's divination and his rapid conquest first of Jerusalem and then of Ammon (21:18-32).

Consider these chapters in the light of the individualism of chapter 18. The prophet here sees righteous and wicked cut off together (21:3, 4). His concern in chapter 18 is with the children's suffering for the father's guilt. The broad statement of 14:14 is explained by 14:20: Noah's sons and their wives were saved with righteous Noah. Compare Job 1 and 8:4-7. Ezekiel feels strangely the unity of the Jewish community: his threat is not "I will scatter the people," but (22:15) "I will scatter thee (that is, the nation)." And his insistence upon the whole evil history of Israel, a foundling, a son of an Amorite father and a Canaanite mother, in chapters 16, 20, and 23, indicates, as previously intimated, that he was not dead to the question of racial solidarity

and "the taint in the blood"—the "old Adam" in Paul's phrase.

(11) The "Pentecost of Calamity," personal and national. Like Hosea, and in keeping with prophetic method, Ezekiel makes his most intimate personal sorrow a text and "sign" of his message.

Read Ezekiel 24.

§ 22. Ezekiel's Indictment of the Nations.

Ezekiel 25 to 32.

¶1. Ezekiel's prophecies against the nations are not merely a collection of oracles, like a modern book of sermons that have no essential unity of theme; they form an orderly part of his book, which presents first the judgment on Judah, then on the nations, and then the restoration. The judgment on the nations is sometimes regarded as a necessary forerunner of the restoration, and therefore the first section of the second division rather than, as in the present treatment, as the second of the three grand divisions of the book. Compare Amos 1 and 2, where judgment on the nations is merely an introduction to the coming judgment upon Israel.

¶2. What is the especial sin of Ammon and Moab, and what that of Edom and Philistia, for which these four nations shall be punished? and what is their punishment?

Read Ezekiel 25.

What are the sins of the neighboring nations in Amos 1? Is there any difference in the point of view?

¶3. One of the finest of the Old Testament oracles against foreign peoples is Ezekiel's oracle on Tyre.

Note how the imagery of the sea and of the business of fishing and of commerce is turned upon this great trading, fishing seaport (26:3-5, 14 and 19).

Very effectively does the lament recounting her greatness close with the lament of her friends (27:32) and the gloating of rival merchants (27:36). The oracle then turns to the prince of Tyre, whose sin is what (28:2-6)? Now, getting the total beauty and power of the oracle,

Read Ezekiel 26:1 to 28:19.

¶4. A short companion oracle on Tyre's sister city, Sidon.

Read Ezekiel 28:20-26.

¶5. Oracles on Egypt.

Read Ezekiel 29:1 to 32:16.

What are the especial sins of Egypt (29:6 and 9)? Who shall conquer her? What is her punishment? How long shall her "captivity" last?

¶6. The general judgment upon the nations.

Read Ezekiel 32:17-32.

One might compare this "Thanatopsis" (or "thoughts on death") of the nations with William Cullen Bryant's "Thanatopsis" of individuals.

Increasingly in Hebrew history the religious mind turns away from intermediate judgments to a final day of Jehovah when all the nations shall be judged and history shall be turned "right side up" and made to reflect God's ideal. Keep this thought in mind for further consideration.

§ 23. The New Israel To Be.

Ezekiel 33 to 48.

¶1. Says Lofthouse:

The actual reception of the news of the fall of Jerusalem (33: 21) marks the opening of a new activity on the part of Ezekiel. His mouth is "opened." In the months of suspense, while the city was being besieged, he has become assured of the ultimate fate of the heathen; and when the news arrives, although the prophecy of chapter 32 has not yet been delivered, he is aware of his new mission—to make ready his countrymen for that new era of restoration and unsoiled service for which all the disasters inside and outside Israel have only been a preparation. The chapters in which he discharges this duty contain his chief contribution to Old Testament theology, and indeed form the closest link between that and the theology of the New Testament itself. After six years of opposition to all the aspirations of his people, he finds himself now in a position of authority which can only have been equaled by that of Isaiah after the great deliverance of 701 B.C. Sublimely undisturbed as he is by the fact that the Jews were still languishing in exile, the success of his first great prophecy turns his mind to the working out of the details of the second. The political disaster has only served to make possible a religious triumph. But the prophet's tone, though different, is still in one important respect the same. His analysis of Israel's state is far too deep to allow him to forget that the real foe is neither Babylon nor the rule of Zedekiah, but sin.*

¶2. The prophet's classic restatement of his commission and of his message of repentance and hope.

Read Ezekiel 33.

The passage needs meditation rather than comment. Compare verses 21 and 22 with 3:27.

¶3. The false shepherds and the divine assumption of the office of shepherd.

Read Ezekiel 34:1-16*b*.

*Work previously cited, pages 249 and 250.

¶4. The oppressing "fat and strong," and the new shepherd and the covenant of peace.

Read Ezekiel 34:16*c*-31.

Verse 16 suggests a turning point. Not only the shepherds, but the greedy rich are attacked. This reminds one of the earlier prophets, Amos, Micah, and Isaiah.

Who is the new shepherd?

The covenant of peace reflects the ancient struggle against wild beasts and the general dependence on crops. Note the expressions "sleep in the woods" and "showers of blessings."

¶5. The prophet turns from the false shepherds and the oppressing strong and rich within Judah to the neighboring nation whose enmity and exultation at her sister's fall constituted an ever-sore spot in Hebrew thinking (compare Amos 1:11*b*); he answers their mocking laugh with a picture of Israel's rehabilitation and prosperity.

Read Ezekiel 35 and 36.

Why did Israel's sorrows come upon her? The new era will, therefore, mean the banishment of idols and of sin. Compare 36:37 with 14:1, 2 and 20:1-3.

Jehovah acts for his holy name's sake (36:22 and 32), not because Israel is more deserving than other peoples, though he had given them statutes "which if a man, do he shall live in them" (20:11). Jehovah will cleanse them and give them a new heart; he will put his spirit in them and cause them to walk in his statutes (36:25-28). Compare §36, ¶3 (2) and Paul's doctrine of regeneration and of salvation, not

through law, but through God's free grace. Consider also the kinship of Paul's and Ezekiel's view of the spirit (compare 1 Cor. 12 to 14 and Gal. 5:22, 23 with Ezek. 36:27) as over against the view taken by Peter following Joel (Acts 2:14-18). The depth and breadth of Paul's debt to Jeremiah and Ezekiel has not been generally appreciated. Compare also Jesus's use of Isaiah 61:1, 2 in Luke 4: 16-21.

¶6. The vision of the dry bones and its message of hope for the revivification of the united Israel and Judah.

Read Ezekiel 37.

Ezekiel's chief interest appears in verses 24*b*, 26*b*, and 27—"my statutes" and "my sanctuary."

¶7. The final conflict and the vindication of Jehovah. Taking 39:23 as the key-text and recalling the closing portion of §22, ¶6,

Read Ezekiel 38 and 39.

¶8. The rehabilitated temple, the center of the restored Israel, and the return of Jehovah thereto. Noting the prophet's reassumption of the vision style,

Read Ezekiel 40:1 to 43:17.

It is not unusual in some quarters to regard this interest in the temple as a mark of the decline of prophecy; and, indeed, the building of a house is not as high a task as the building of spiritual conceptions of God and life and history. A nobler vision than this of Ezekiel is that of the holy city that needs no temple (Rev. 21). Yet religion in this world of men needs "a local habitation and a

name," and the world's temple builders have contributed no little to spiritual religion and to life. Temples furnish rallying points for religious life, and preach silent sermons in stone that sometimes outlast sermons of prophetic word. What sermon since Jesus and Paul, for example, has brought the sense of God into more lives than the Cathedral of Cologne? What puts more spirit and progress into local Church life and even into a whole city than a creditable house for divine worship? What part did the temple of Solomon and the post-exilic temple have in the religious life of Judah? These are large questions: consider them in all their phases as far as you are able at this time and then store them away as a question for later thought.

¶9. The ordinances of the altar and the temple.

Read Ezekiel 43:18 to 46:24.

The priestly element of the Old Testament will be treated later in these studies, though not then in great detail. Further consideration need not be given to these ordinances here.

¶10. The temple and the land.

Read Ezekiel 47 and 48.

§ 24. Summary and Review.

¶1. Ezekiel marks, according to many scholars, the burial of prophecy in the priest; but may he not also be considered the Jerusalem priest whom the prophetic spirit conquers and through whom that spirit (which otherwise might have been lost, as it was in northern Israel) becomes, if, indeed, in modified form, a permanent possession of the Jewish folk? Jere-

miah, it is true, represents a higher phenomenon, a priest who became a prophet; and after Ezekiel, priestly and scribal tendencies overlay the moral and spiritual power of prophecy; but within the priestly and scribal sphere the prophetic spirit was preserved by such as Ezekiel to rise to loftier mountain heights than ever in John the Baptist, Jesus, and Paul. Compare §10, ¶4 (1).

¶2. The books of Isaiah and Jeremiah being extended collections of Isaianic and Jeremianic oracles, without more unity of theme than most modern books of sermons, a reading of either of them at a sitting is not so necessary a task. As the book of Ezekiel is not a mere collection of his sermons, but a real book, now

Read the book of Ezekiel continuously at one or two sittings, striving to get its total message.

CHAPTER VII

HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, AND MALACHI

§ 25. Haggai and the Rebuilding of the Temple.

The book of Haggai.

¶ 1. The interest in the temple and the priestly that is so pervasive in Ezekiel persists in post-exilic prophecy. The prophets studied in this chapter are often discounted on account of this fact. This discounting, however, demands analysis. If it means that Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi never rose to such heights as did Isaiah and Jeremiah, and do not stand for an original revolutionary prophetic idea, then the point is well taken; but one must not undervalue stars of the second magnitude. The value of a star in the human firmament is not in its ability to outshine another star, but in its ability to light the pathway. These men applied the prophetic message and spirit to the matters in hand. When the temple was standing or when the people were very ardent worshipers at well-established shrines, one might well attack the formal religious rounds of ceremony; but when the people had no church home, just as it was a great feat for Ezekiel to dream the temple back to life, so it was a worthy task for Haggai and Zechariah to champion its rebuilding and for Malachi to rebuke laxness in habits of religious worship and devotion.

¶2. What was Haggai's explanation of the poverty of the restored postexilic Jewish community and what was his plea and argument?

Read Haggai 1:1-11.

Compare Amos 4:6-12.

¶3. What was the result of his plea?

Read Haggai 1:12-15.

¶4. The popular disappointment and the prophecy of the coming glory.

(1) Compare the dates of 1:1, 2:1, 2:10, and 2:20.

(2) Two obstacles are met: (*a*) The foundations of the new temple seem paltry to those who remember the old—perhaps also to some who recall the magnificent temples of Babylon; and (*b*) the better conditions are not immediately forthcoming after the work of rebuilding the temple is begun.

For Haggai's answer to the first,

Read Haggai 2:8 and 9.

As regards the second, he preaches the doctrine that "it is disease, not health, that is contagious," arguing that ceremonial pollution, not holiness, spreads; and he assures the people that "from this day forward" the blessing will come.

Read verse 19*c*.

(3) More significant, however, is the larger hope that Jehovah is going to set history aright and establish the social order that he has had in mind all along. Noting in particular verses 6, 7 and 21, 22,

Read Haggai 2:1-23.

Who was Zerubbabel and what was his relation

to the movement? See a commentary or Bible dictionary on Zerubbabel if time and opportunity allow.

§ 26. Zechariah.

¶ 1. Zechariah's interpretation of the course of history as a vindication of the word spoken by Jehovah through former prophets.

Read Zechariah 1:1-6.

¶ 2. The visions.

Zechariah 1:7 to 6:15.

(1) The first vision and the great question brought forward by the continued calamities befalling Jehovah's people—"How long?" Noting especially verse 12,

Read Zechariah 1:7-17.

What is the answer to the question? and what in your own words is the doctrine of verse 15?

(2) The second vision and the coming vengeance.

Read Zechariah 1:18-21.

(3) The third vision and the coming glory.

Read Zechariah 2.

Compare for the form of the vision Amos 7:7 and 8. Compare Zechariah 2:9 with Haggai's prophecies. In the vision an angel of great authority rebukes the smallness of the hopes of the one who would measure the future Jerusalem by the dimensions of the old: the new city will overflow the walls. As in the Spartan story her citizens were the walls of Sparta, so what is to be the wall of Jerusalem (verse 5)? Compare Isaiah 26:1.

Note particularly the missionary outlook of verse

11. More and more the broader spirits realize that Israel's religion is for the world.

(4) The fourth vision, the cleansed nation and the purged iniquity.

Read Zechariah 3.

Keep this chapter in mind as you pass to the next.

(5) The fifth vision and the new leader. Comparing Haggai and noting especially verses 7-9,

Read Zechariah 4.

Compare verses 6 and 7 with Jesus's word on the faith that removes mountains. Increasingly the demand of the Hebrew religion is for the removal of guilt and sin, and for faith. The extreme devotion to the law itself is an expression of the faith that not by power and might but by doing God's will, and leaving the rest to him, is the triumph of righteousness and of God's people to come. It was Paul's great contribution that he built the Christian philosophy of religion upon a faith and a justification that did away with the legalism of the law, but in so doing Paul was interpreting the deeper spirit of the postexilic religion.

(6) The sixth vision and the winnowing out of wicked individuals.

Read Zechariah 5:1-4.

"The gist of the teaching of the vision, therefore," says Mitchell, concluding his comment on the passage, "is that Yahweh will not again punish the Jews as a people by any such universal calamity as the exile, but will henceforth inflict upon each individual sinner the penalty for his personal offenses. In

other words, it is an announcement, so far as the Jews are concerned, of an era of individualism."*

Compare §21, ¶5 (8).

(7) The seventh vision and the exile of the principle of wickedness.

Read Zechariah 5:5-11.

(8) The eighth vision and the permanent protection of the restored community.

Read Zechariah 6.

The chief enemies of the Israelites were the Empire of Egypt to the south and the Empires of Babylonia and Assyria to the northward. Hence the chief protection is to be in these directions. The last chariot is for the other enemies. Observe the reappearance of the missionary note and of the idea of the Davidic branch.

¶3. The inquiry, now that the temple is no longer in ruins, concerning fasting: what is the prophetic answer?

Read Zechariah 7 and 8.

Zechariah thinks that the established fast was not in the first place "unto Jehovah": it was, the prophet seems to maintain, sorrow over calamity rather than regret for sin; but in any case he shows a more excellent way. Note 7:8-12 and 8:14-17. Zechariah reasserts the strong moral emphasis of Amos, and in this respect seems, as far as the record goes, much broader and deeper than Haggai. Com-

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*The International Critical Commentary, "Haggai and Zechariah," pages 170 and 171.

pare the answer of Jesus to the Pharisees concerning fasting (Mark 2:18-22).

Two other points are especially significant in the passage under surveillance: (*a*) The missionary note of 8:22, 23; and (*b*) the second is best expressed perhaps in the picture of the situation given by George Adam Smith:

> For ourselves the chief profit of these beautiful oracles is their lesson that the remedy for the sordid tempers and cruel hatreds, engendered by the fierce struggle for existence, is found in civic and religious hopes, in a noble ideal for the national life, and in the assurance that God's love is at the back of all, with nothing impossible to it. Amid these glories, however, the heart will probably thank Zechariah most for his immortal picture of the streets of the new Jerusalem: old men and women sitting in the sun, boys and girls playing in all the open places. The motive of it, as we have seen, was found in the circumstances of his own day. Like many another emigration, for religion's sake, from the heart of civilization to a barren coast, the poor colony of Jerusalem consisted chiefly of men, young and in middle life. The barren years gave no encouragement to marriage. The constant warfare with neighboring tribes allowed few to reach gray hairs. It was a rough and hard society, unblessed by the two great benedictions of life, childhood and old age. But this should all be changed, and Jerusalem filled with placid old men and women and with joyous boys and girls.*

¶4. The coming kingdom.

Read Zechariah 9:1 to 11:3.

As frequently in the prophets, the passage in-

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*The Expositor's Bible, "The Twelve Prophets," Vol. II., pages 324 and 325.

cludes oracles of punishment upon foreign nations; but two points are of paramount importance: (*a*) The remnant for Jehovah to be taken from these foreign nations, and (*b*) the picture of a king riding, not upon a war horse, but making his triumphal entry upon the beast of peaceful toil, the ass (9:7-10; compare Matt. 21:1-11).

¶ 5. The allegory of the good and the bad shepherd.

Read Zechariah 11:4-17; and for the future of the bad shepherd

Read 13:7-9, which some scholars think has been dislocated in the manuscripts from its proper place after 11:17.

An interesting interpretation of this passage also is given by George Adam Smith:

> The spiritual principles which underlie this allegory are obvious. God's own sheep, persecuted and helpless though they be, are yet obstinate, and their obstinacy not only renders God's good will to them futile, but causes the death of the one man who could have done them good. The guilty sacrifice the innocent, but in this execute their own doom. That is a summary of the history of Israel.*

¶ 6. More and more the mind of later prophetism turns to the final contest with evil and the final wind-up of history, when the scores of earth shall be made even and when the perfect rule of Jehovah shall ensue. The hopelessness of complete obedience to law demands a fountain for sin and uncleanness (13:1); the foreigner is included (14:16); Jehovah shall be king over all the earth (14:9); and there

*Book cited, page 475.

shall be no more curse (14:11). The horse is not merely displaced by the ass (as in 9:9), but is himself transformed from an instrument of war into a proclaimer of the holiness of Jehovah (14:20). With these points in mind,

Read Zechariah 12 to 14.

§ 27. Malachi.

¶1. So long as the Israelites looked upon Jehovah as a purely national God, his love and constant protection to the very limit of his power was assured. The shortcoming of this attitude was that it made no higher moral demands. It was the merit of Amos and his successors that Israel was made to see how unworthy a notion of God such a conception was. Jehovah, the prophets taught, could not be on Israel's side right or wrong. He was against the cruelty and oppression of the neighboring nations: he must likewise stand against cruelty and oppression within Israel.

But now the situation has changed. The thinking people of Israel have learned to think of Jehovah, not as a mere national God, but as the world's God. Then there arises the new question, "Does Jehovah care for Israel?"

Read Malachi 1:1-5.

Malachi does not go back to Jehovah's ancient deliverances of his people, whose very ancientness might raise new questions; he cites a current instance of the utter destruction of a neighboring people in contrast with the chastening of Israel. This doctrine of the destruction of others as over against

the chastening of the chosen people becomes a settled doctrine of later Jewish writers (Wisd. of Sol. 16: 5, 18:20, 19: 1; and 2 Macc. 6:12). Compare Romans 9 to 11—the destruction of Israel is only seeming and temporary. Compare in particular Malachi's comparison of Jacob and Esau with Paul's in Romans 9:10-13.

¶2. What other aspects of current doubt are found later in the book?

Read Malachi 2:17, 3:13-15. Compare Zechariah 1:12.

¶3. The faithless priesthood and the polluted ritual.

Read Malachi 1:6 to 2:9.

There has been much variation of opinion in the interpretation of Malachi 1:11. Pusey says: "The form of words does not express whether this declaration relates to the present or the future. It is a vivid present, such as is often used to describe the future. But the things spoken of show it to be the future."* Note the words "shall be" in the English version are in italics, indicating that they are supplied by the translators in order to make the translation explicit and to give the translator's interpretation of the Hebrew. Some interpreters think the verse refers to the way Persian governors, for instance, had shown respect for Jehovah; or to heathen sacrifices, which are regarded as blundering efforts to reach out after the true God. Others think it means to compare the devotion of the Hebrews of the dis-

*"Minor Prophets," Vol. II, page 471.

persion with the polluted offerings of those having the advantage of the Jerusalem Temple.

Note that in 2:7 the priest, rather than the prophet, is the current regular spokesman of Jehovah in this period of the decline of prophecy.

¶4. The thwarting of God's main purpose in history by foreign marriages.

Read Malachi 2:10-16.

Jehovah's purpose in history is expressed in the middle of verse 15, "he sought a godly seed." This may not be an exactly correct reading of the original text, but it seems to express the basis of the prophet's thought in the passage. The Jews had gone so far in some cases, it seems, as to divorce their Jewish wives in favor of these foreign alliances. The prophet speaks against divorce itself, but the main thought seems to be that Jehovah wants to develop a pure, elect people, and that foreign alliances would introduce a heathen element into Israel's religion. "Jehovah will cut off the progeny of such a one," is the prophet's threat.

¶5. The coming Age.

Read Malachi 3 and 4.

Note the prediction of a forerunner in 3:1, 4:5, 6. Compare Mark 1:2, 9:12, 13. The day of Jehovah (3:2, 4:1) is not merely as it was in the popular thought of the time of Amos, a day when Jehovah takes up an active championship of Israel, but is a day of ethical judgment. Compare Amos 5:18 and Luke 3:7-9 and 16, 17. Malachi is interested in the ritual (3:4), but in the moral as well (3:5, 6). There is also a great promise: what (4:2, 3) is it?

To what does Haggai attribute the contemporary poverty and want (§25, ¶2)? What is Malachi's challenge (3:10-12)? Like Ezekiel, he arraigns present (3:8) and past (3:7).

In 4:4-6 Moses represents the law and the past; Elijah, prophecy and the future.

¶6. Read at one or two sittings the three books studied in this chapter, getting both the similarity of tone in them all and the distinctive viewpoint and message of each.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PROPHETS OF THE OVERTHROW OF HEATHEN NATIONS AND THE VINDICATION OF ISRAEL

§ 28. Obadiah and Nahum.

¶1. It must be confessed that the prophets included in the present chapter—Obadiah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Joel, and Habakkuk—form in some respects a miscellaneous group and that a general topic has been sought to fit those, exclusive of Jonah and Daniel, not already studied. Micah was treated before Isaiah partly because he, a peasant with the peasant-prophet's viewpoint, naturally followed in the wake of Amos and Hosea, while Isaiah, as a city man and a temple prophet, represented a new movement; partly because it is well to consider Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel together. Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi represent the continuation of that alliance of prophecy and the temple begun in Isaiah and reaching a culmination in Ezekiel. Jeremiah in many ways belongs rather to the peasant group; but his independent influence over Ezekiel places him in this group. The prophets to be examined in the present chapter are rather left over from this scheme, partly because they do not fit into the main lines of development, partly also because there is so much difference of opinion about the dates of the activity of some of them.

Yet it is thought that the title of the chapter correctly represents the prophets as a group. Arraignments of the nations and prophecies of particular punishments and of a general judgment are included in the other books; and in some, especially Ezekiel and Zechariah, an ultimate vindication of Israel is a central interest; yet it may fairly be said that in none of them are these themes so all-absorbing as in the prophets now under review.

¶2. There seems to have been an ancient oracle against Edom quoted in both Obadiah and Jeremiah.

Read Obadiah 1-14 and Jeremiah 49:7-17.

Compare the way the books of Isaiah and Micah similarly incorporate the oracle on world-peace (Isa. 2:2-4 and Mic. 4:1-5). What parts of the two passages read are common to Obadiah and Jeremiah? Note the remarkable description of the mountainous people, with their natural defenses and pride of situation; also the strength of the figures in Obadiah 5. Edom was the most age-long of Israel's foes, though closest of kin. Her cruelty seemed to many of the prophets more forgivable than her mockery at her sister Judah's fall (verses 11, 12).

¶3. The interest of the book of Obadiah goes far beyond the destruction of Edom, however. Edom's fall is a type of a larger judgment. Noting particularly the first and last clauses of the passage,

Read Obadiah 15-21.

"The kingdom shall be Jehovah's"—this is almost the fine phrase of Jesus, "The kingdom of God."

¶4. Jehovah a God of judgment and deliverance.

Read Nahum 1.

The chapter is a piece of vivid description. Consider carefully the idea of God it sets forth.

¶5. What Obadiah is to the age-long, neighbor-kinsman foe, Edom, Nahum is to the powerful empire of Assyria, the arch-destroyer and conqueror. Speaking of Nahum's literary style, Driver says: "Of all the prophets, he is the one who in dignity and force approaches most nearly to Isaiah."* Recalling Assyria's ruthless career of conquest,

Read Nahum 2 and 3.

(*a*) Pick out the strongest and tersest phrases in the passage.

(*b*) Ashurbanipal says in his account of the capture of Thebes:[1] "That entire city, under the protection of Ashur and Ishtar, my hands captured—silver, gold, precious stones, the contents of his palace, all that there was: parti-colored raiment, cloth, horses, and people, male and female. Two tall obelisks . . . I removed from their place and took to Assyria. Heavy spoils without number I carried off from Thebes."**

Ashurbanipal, like other kings of the East, felt his conquests to be under the leadership of his gods. Consider the superiority of Nahum's conception of a God who rules the world working through the

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*New Century Bible, "Minor Prophets," Vol. II., page 12.

[1]Ashurbanipal was one of Assyria's greatest kings; Thebes was the great city of upper Egypt, also called No-amon (Nahum 3:8).

**Quoted by J. M. P. Smith in the International Critical Commentary, page 344.

forces of history to accomplish his ends of justice and judgment.

(*c*) The fortresses shall be like fig trees and the defenders like first ripe figs; the people in the city, when their fortresses have fallen, are—here the prophet changes the figure—not real warriors, but "women" (verses 12, 13*b*).* This last is said with all the contempt of an ancient man for womankind.

(*d*) Nahum is no mere narrow nationalist, as some scholars would make out. Says George Adam Smith: "It is not in Judah's name he exults, but in that of all the people of Western Asia. . . . Nahum gives voice to no national passions, but to the outraged conscience of mankind."** Compare ¶ 3, above.

§ 29. Zephaniah and Joel.

¶ 1. The general judgment and the call to repentance and steadfastness.

Read Zephaniah 1:1 to 2:3.

Note three points:

(*a*) The description of the terrors of the day of Jehovah (1:2, 3 and 14-18).

(*b*) The classes upbraided by the prophet: The Baal-worshipers;[a] the devotees of foreign worships;

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*For a variant interpretation of this passage see the International Critical Commentary, page 346.

**Expositor's Bible, "The Twelve Prophets," Vol. II., page 103.

[a]Baal here seems to be not a foreign god, but the old local Baals. The earlier prophets made war on the foreign Baals brought in by the wives of Solomon and Ahab. The battle is begun by Ahijah, who seems to place this beside the heavy taxation in stirring up revolt against

the renegades from Jehovah, probably including or identical with the class just mentioned; the royal house; the traders (note the marginal reading for "The people of Canaan"); and those who feel that Jehovah does not care or is powerless to act effectively. These seem all included in the condemnation of verse 17: "They have sinned against Jehovah."

(*c*) Zephaniah 2:1, 2, which seems, according to the present text, to urge the nation at large to repent; and verse 3, which seems to exhort the faithful ones to continue to seek Jehovah.

¶2. The judgment on the nations. What three neighbor nations and what two more distant ones are indicted by the prophet?

Read Zephaniah 2:4-15.

Ethiopia is named possibly for Egypt in view of the long rule of Egypt by an Ethiopian dynasty.

Compare the section on Moab and Ammon with the first half of Obadiah; and that on Assyria with Nahum (especially Nahum 3:19 with Zeph. 2:15).

¶3. Jerusalem and the great day.

Read Zephaniah 3.

Verses 1-7 upbraid the wicked (what four classes are named?); and verses 8-20 turn attention to the

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Solomon; and after Elijah's and Elisha's onslaughts, the victory is finally won under Jehu. Hosea leads a crusade against the local Baals. This so far succeeds that only a remnant of this worship (Zeph. 1:4) is left in Zephaniah's day, but there has been a prodigious revival of the foreign worship through the influence of King Manasseh. This seems the most probable reconstruction of the history.

true Israel. Note that Zephaniah 2:11 and 3:9-12 bring heathen into the Israel of God.

¶4. The foretaste of judgment, and the coming day.

Read Joel 1:1 to 2:11.

Joel reflects the same message as Zephaniah. Jehovah will soon come in judgment upon the nation or the nations. In 2:2 he quotes Zephaniah or Zephaniah quotes him in the corresponding passage (1:15), or else both take up a current prophetic phrase.

It is beyond the scope of the present study to discuss or take sides upon mooted questions of date. Suffice it to say that scholars put Joel very early or quite late: it is usually agreed that an intermediate date will not fit him. His noteworthy descriptive powers remind one of Nahum.

Note the vivid description of the locusts as a nation in 1:6, 7 and as an army in 2:4-11;* also the pitiful wail of the cattle and wild beasts in 1:18-20.

All this, however, is only an earnest of the real day of Jehovah (1:15 and 2:1, 2).

¶5. The prophet calls the nation to a genuine heart-repentance.

Read Joel 2:12-17.

¶6. The reprieve and the blessing for the repentant.

Read Joel 2:18-29.

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*For details see any good commentary—Pusey, George Adam Smith, the International Critical Commentary, the New Century Bible, etc. There are numerous points worthy of mention, but they would extend beyond the limits of the present study.

There will be (*a*) no more invasions of locusts and even a restoration of the years the locusts have eaten, so that the nation will no more be "a reproach;" and (*b*), more important than all, an outpouring of the spirit, not merely upon a few prophetic souls, but upon all the people. Contrast verses 28 and 29 with Amos 8:11. What use is made of Joel 2:28, 29 in the New Testament? Meditate on this Old Testament passage and the New Testament application and fulfillment. Compare also Joel's religious democracy with Paul's doctrine that in Christ there is neither male nor female, bond nor free. The two great barriers of sex and slavery are broken down in both ideals.

¶7. The final day of judgment.

Read Joel 2:30 to 3:21.

What foreign nations are designated for destruction (3:4 and 19)? Which ones are so designated in Zephaniah? Why does one prophet single out some nations and other prophets select other nations?

Note the play upon Isaiah 2:4 (Mic. 4:3) in Joel 3:10—or *vice versa*, if Joel be the older.

¶8. Now read at a sitting the books of Obadiah, Nahum, Zephaniah, and Joel, comparing thoughtfully their characteristics and varying emphases on their common message of judgment.

§ 30. Habakkuk.

¶1. The book of Habakkuk is one of the most difficult of interpretation in the whole Old Testament. For the purposes of the present study it will

be divided into three sections: (*a*) Habakkuk's statement of the central problem of Hebrew thought and his solution, (*b*) the six woes, (*c*) the Psalm on the God of the great past deliverance who can be trusted for the future.

Moralizing the popular religion (which conceived of Jehovah as the national God, sure to defend his people from every invader, unless angry with them, perchance, for some ritual reason),* the earlier prophets threatened punishment upon Israel from Jehovah for her sins of oppression and injustice. Where punishment seemed administered through natural causes—as, for example, the locust plague of Joel—there was no ulterior question; but where another nation was the instrument of Jehovah's punishment a further moral question did arise—namely, "Is that nation better than Israel?" This was the problem of Isaiah 10:5-15. Compare the apocryphal book of 2 Esdras, 3:31.

Continued oppression by the heathen brought doubt to many Hebrew hearts.

Read again Malachi 2:17, 3:13-15, and Zephaniah 1:12.

Sometimes devouter souls than those condemned by Malachi and Zephaniah had the question borne in upon their minds. Joel fears for what the heathen will think (2:17), and the problem intrudes itself into Zechariah's visions (1:12), where an angel asks

*Compare the Moabite stone, "Kemosh was angry with his land," quoted in the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," page 147, from Mercer's "Extra Biblical Sources for Hebrew and Jewish History," page 148.

Jehovah the great question of later Hebrew thought. With even more boldness Habakkuk weighs the same question and the larger problem it brings forward. George Adam Smith contrasts him with earlier prophets: "They address the nation Israel, on behalf of God: he rather speaks to God on behalf of Israel. . . . They attack the sins, he is the first to state the problems, of life. . . . This is the beginning of speculation in Israel."* Smith probably exaggerates the case under almost any reasonable theory of dates and authorship of prophetic writings.

Habakkuk inherits his problem and, like other prophets, states it only to furnish an answer, not to open the way to speculation, if the extant Old Testament text is to be followed. Still his temper is unusual, if not indeed new, and in a tone that prepares the way for later Judaism and for Christianity he urges a policy of "watchful waiting" for the vindication of God. "I will stand upon my watch. . . . Though it tarry, I will *wait* for it," he says. It is the message of faith when one cannot see.

¶2. Habakkuk's statement of the central problem of Hebrew thought and his solution.

(*a*) The problem.

Read Habakkuk 1:1-4, 13, and 17.

(*b*) The Chaldeans the rod of Jehovah's wrath.

Read Habakkuk 1:5-11.

Perhaps—for scholars differ widely in their inter-

*Expositor's Bible, "The Twelve Prophets," Vol. II., pages 130 and 131.

pretations—Habakkuk 1:1 to 2:4 is a summary of the prophetic philosophy of history in a dialogue between Jehovah and the prophet or between Jehovah and prophecy taken in its entirety and personified. Here is the ancient social wrong such as Amos condemned: why does not Jehovah punish it? The answer is, Jehovah is raising up the Chaldeans for that very purpose.

(*c*) The larger ethical question arises, What is the moral character of the Chaldeans? Jehovah is righteous and pure, the prophet insists, and is working out his own purposes. Comparing again Isaiah 10:5-11,

Read Habakkuk 1:12-17.

Note particularly Habakkuk's picture of a nation worshiping its own power.

(*d*) What can the prophets say to these things? Isaiah 10:12-15 seems to come from one who did not feel the heavy weight of sorrow and oppression and of Jehovah's apparent delays; Habakkuk's answer is a cry from the depth of a continuous experience of calamity.

Read Habakkuk 2:1-4.

"Yea, wait thou for Jehovah." (Compare Ps. 27:14.) "The righteous shall live through the faithfulness and steadfastness of God," says the prophet; or else "The righteous shall live in a steadfastness begotten of a faith that the vision is for the appointed time, and it hasteth toward the end, and shall not lie;" "Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay," he feels. In either case the meaning is the same. The righteous Isra-

elite is to live in and by an attitude of trust in Jehovah.[a]

¶3. The six woes. The first four woes refer chiefly to such plunder as the Chaldeans (like the Assyrians of Nahum's prophecy) were guilty of, though the word "wine" in verse 5 seems difficult in this connection. The fifth woe may refer to the way the Chaldeans rendered the nations drunken and stupefied rather than to the giving of drink to an individual neighbor: in which case the sixth woe might refer to the idolatrous customs of the Chaldeans. These last two or even the whole series of woes may be, however, not the continuation of the theme of Habakkuk 1:1 to 2:4, but a separate oracle. Choosing the view which most appeals to you,

Read Habakkuk 2:5-20.

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[a]The interpretation here given is contrary to that of many modern scholars who contrast the Greek or Septuagint translation πίστις (pistis), on which Paul depends, with the Hebrew אֱמוּנָה (ᵉmunah)—the former meaning faith, the latter rather integrity, firmness. A careful examination of the other places in the Old Testament where the word is used indicates that the word here will bear the sense of the second alternative offered in the discussion above, and no other sense is consistent with the context, unless one take the first alternative, which involves the same attitude on the part of righteous men. The Hebrew of 2:4*a*, which, like 2:5, is difficult of interpretation under any theory, is amended by some scholars. A simpler explanation is that which many think to have occurred not infrequently in ancient manuscripts, a displacement of the text in the course of scribal copying. Certainly 2:4*a* fits in with the idea of haughtiness in 2:5.

¶4. The Psalm on the God of a great past deliverance who can be trusted for the future.

(*a*) The prophet prays for such a deliverance now in the midst of the dull round of years as had once come, presumably at the beginning of the national history. He then describes this deliverance.

Read Habakkuk 3:1-15.

(*b*) What should be the attitude of the righteous Israelite in a current crisis or in the dull monotony of uneventful years?

Read Habakkuk 3:16-19.

Here the Psalm reaches great spiritual heights. Either "Rejoice in Jehovah, whether outward prosperity ever comes or not," it says, or else "Trust in him, rejoicing in the deliverance that is sure to come, as if it were already present."

¶5. The Psalm, then, sounds the same note as the dialogue—the woes giving certain deductions called for in both. It is the cry heard in Nahum and Obadiah, in Zephaniah and Joel—give God time and the workings of history will vindicate his righteousness. With this in mind,

Read Habakkuk at a sitting.

CHAPTER IX

JONAH

§ 31. Jonah, the High Water Mark of the Old Testament's Wider Outlook.

¶1. The book of Jonah is universally recognized as unique among the prophets. The other books contain chiefly prophetic oracles and sermons, and where biographical material is inserted it aims to tell of the prophet's activity as a setting for his message. Sometimes a bit of prophetic activity is employed as an object lesson—as, for example, Isaiah's walking barefoot or Jeremiah's wearing of a yoke. Some scholars think that Hosea married at Jehovah's command a woman already debauched in order that he might illustrate his message to Israel, in which case Hosea 1 to 3 is of the same character as the two acts of Isaiah and Jeremiah just mentioned. The usual interpretation of Hosea, however, makes Hosea 1 to 3 the closest analogy in the prophets to the book of Jonah—an incident out of the prophet's life, not enacted to drive home a message, but told to illustrate a point quite foreign to the prophet's intention during the incident. Hosea's wife proved untrue to him and becomes an abandoned harlot. "See in this woman, O Israel, a picture of thyself," says Hosea 1 to 3. Jonah is a narrow, unmissionary soul whose selfishness and narrowness are laid bare in an account of his ministry to Nineveh. "See, O Israel, a picture of thyself," says

the book of Jonah, "in this bigoted, unloving, ungodlike prophet." Hosea 1 to 3, however, is simply an introduction to sermons of that prophet, enforcing for the most part the same message; the account of Jonah's ministry stands alone to utter its message without further reënforcement.

Though unique amongst the prophetic books, Jonah is quite typical of the Old Testament narrative. All peoples love a good story for its own sake, but some races are of a more artistic bent and develop this love of a story for its own sake to a very high pitch. Other peoples, though not lacking in imagination, are nevertheless of so practical or serious-minded a disposition that they make their stories subservient to some practical or moral purpose. There is, for example, in the negro folklore a love of a good story, yet beneath that runs the purpose of showing how meek shrewdness overcomes brute strength. Sam Jones used to say, when people sometimes objected to his illustrations; "They illustrate, and that's all the use I have for an illustration." So Abraham Lincoln told his stories, some very clever and interesting, nearly always in order to bring out a point he wished to make.

Now the Greeks, though not unready at times to use their stories to enforce and apply moral truth, became the masters of the story for the story's sake, and indeed of all art for art's sake. And this is not an attitude to be lightly esteemed, for the beautiful, as well as the true and the good, is a constituent part of the supreme good of life.

The Hebrews, though not passing by entirely the

story told for its inherent interest and attractiveness, became masters of the story with a point, the story that goes beyond itself, the "illustration that illustrates." If Nathan had stopped with his great parable (2 Sam. 12:1-4), it would have been an immortal literary gem; but probably Nathan would never have thought out the story but for his purpose of saying at its close, "Thou art the man"—"This, David, is a picture of thyself." The same is true of the parables of Jesus as of the narratives of Ruth, of Hosea 1 to 3, and especially of the book of Jonah.[a]

One other point of introduction must be mentioned here. There can be no doubt that Hosea himself tells the story of his unfortunate married life. Some scholars, as has been seen, think it relates what never really happened—that it is a parable; most recent scholars, however, think it a real chapter of Hosea's life.

Now whether Jonah is an autobiography in which the prophet relates the experience of his conversion from a narrow nationalism to a missionary viewpoint, or a literal history of the prophet Jonah ben-Amittai[1] related by another prophet of truer insight

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[a]So unusually long an introduction is not intended merely for the understanding of the book of Jonah, but this is taken as the logical place for discussing an aspect of Old Testament literature, without a knowledge of which one's view of the Old Testament is inadequate. Furthermore, it aims to throw light upon passages treated elsewhere, especially upon the books of Ruth and Esther.

[1]For the meaning of the prefix "ben" see footnote on page 24.

(compare 1 Kings 13), or a parable—on this question there is wide disagreement. Dr. Edward Leigh Pell, after stating the various possibilities, says: "Fortunately it is not necessary to determine the character of the book in order to arrive at its meaning."* Others feel that to deny or doubt its historicity is to discount the Bible. It is certainly fair to say, however, that the chief message is the same, whatever view may be taken of its literary character and authorship.

¶2. Jonah flees his divine commission.

Read Jonah 1:1-3.

Jonah ben-Amittai was probably the typical nationalistic prophet. Elijah was a champion of the religion of Jehovah, not of Israelitish nationalism; Elisha, while aiding the armies of Israel, was interested in the dynasty of Syria and healed a Syrian general;** Micaiah ben-Imlah boldly predicts Ahab's death and Israel's defeat by a foreign foe; Nathan earlier is a private chaplain who fearlessly rebukes his chief.

Of Jonah ben-Amittai little very is known, but from 2 Kings 14:25 he seems an evangel of a larger Israelitish nationalism. To have been given the commission of Nahum, "Announce Nineveh's destruction," would have been a commission exactly to Jonah's fancy; but for Jehovah to say, "Announce

*Senior Graded Series of Sunday School Lessons, M. E. Church, South, Student's Text Book, Second Year, Part II., page 174.

**See "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," §66, ¶12.

to Nineveh her forthcoming destruction," could have but one object—Jehovah desires Nineveh to repent and be saved (compare Jonah 4:2). Such an outcome the narrow nationalistic prophet could not tolerate; therefore he flees from the presence of Jehovah. But

¶3. The God of the heavens and land and sea pursues.

Read Jonah 1:4-10.

It was characteristic of a narrow nationalistic prophet to harbor the primitive view that Jehovah dwelt in Israel only, and that once beyond the boundary of Jehovah's land he is beyond Jehovah's interest and control. Perhaps the feeling of relief in his successful flight "from the presence of Jehovah" was the reason for his calm deep sleep during the storm (verse 5). When he awakes Jehovah is a bigger God to him: by what title does he call Jehovah now (verse 9)?

¶4. The kind humanity of the heathen sailors and their openness of heart toward the religion of Jehovah.

Read Jonah 1:11-16.

¶5. Jonah's miraculous deliverance and prayer of thanksgiving.

Read Jonah 1:17 to 2:10.

Compare Matthew 12:39, 40.

¶6. The great popular preacher and the conversion of Nineveh.

Read Jonah 3.

Compare Luke 11:29-32. It is highly significant

that Jesus finds his own Old Testament prototype not in the powerful Elijah or the sturdy Amos, not in the courtly prophet-statesman Isaiah, not in the suffering Jeremiah, but in the popular preacher to the masses, Jonah.

¶7. What was Jonah's attitude toward the success of his preaching?

Read Jonah 4:1-5.

¶8. Through what means is the prophet taught God's point of view? and what in your own words is that point of view?

Read Jonah 4:6-11.

The narrow-minded Jonah fled because he deemed the heathen, and perhaps especially the cruel Ninevites, unworthy of Jehovah's salvation, and because he suspected Jehovah's purpose to be their salvation. But he does not represent the deeper current of prophecy, which it is the purpose of this story of Jonah's ministry to set forth. The message of the book therefore is: God loves the heathen and desires their salvation, not their destruction. It is Israel's narrowmindedness and lack of the broader sympathy that deems otherwise. The book closes with Jehovah's question concerning the sparing of Nineveh and does not even assert Jonah's conversion to this point of view: this is left to the reader's conjecture.

Compare Amos 3:2 and 9:7; Isaiah 3:4 and 49:6, etc.; 2 Kings 5:1-19. See also the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," §66, ¶12, and the references there given.

Compare, too, Plato's prophecy that in the ideal

state "Greeks should deal with barbarians as Greeks now deal with one another."*

One might note in passing that while most statesmen in the allied world were, at best, Nahums heralding and hoping for a crushing blow to Germany, the American President, with his distinction between "the German people" and "the present rulers of Germany," sought the conversion of that nation and people to democracy and world-brotherhood, thus reflecting the great viewpoint of the book of Jonah.

¶9. While Isaiah 53, Micah 6:1-8, Hosea 11:1-8, and Jeremiah 31:31-34 are pinnacles of Old Testament religious insight, Isaiah 2:2-4 (Micah 4:1-4) and the book of Jonah are pinnacles of the Old Testament's world-idealism. Now,

(*a*) In the light of your studies, and getting the power and sweep and insight of its messages, at one sitting,

Read the book of Jonah.

(*b*) Is it justly that Jonah has been called "the greatest missionary document ever penned"? Is the book any less a message on the larger internationalism preached by President Wilson than on the missionary program of the Church? Following the new social movement which arose three-quarters of a century ago men turned to the Old Testament prophets to find them thoroughly alive to the social interest. Now, in the era of the new internationalism, one feels that from Amos to Daniel their inter-

*Quoted by Griggs, "The Soul of Democracy," page 23.

ests were at least as largely centered in the socio-international as in the internal social movements. How eternally modern they are!

What is the book's doctrine of God as it appears in 4:11? Consider this as an extension to other people of Hosea 1:1-8. Compare Amos's doctrine of judgment equally upon all and John the Baptist's message with Jonah's and Jesus's doctrine of God's universal love.

CHAPTER X

DANIEL

§ 32. Daniel and the New Divine World Order.

¶1. Among the prophetic books not less unique than Jonah, and even more obviously so, is the book of Daniel. Here, indeed, arises a new question, for while Daniel is included among the prophets in the English versions it is not counted with them in the Hebrew Bible. There are three separate strata of the Old Testament canon: the Law, the Prophets, and "Writings" or "Other Writings," sometimes designated "Psalms," presumably because the Psalms was the first book in the standard Jewish recension of this third collection or canon.

Read Luke 24:44; compare the prologue to the apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus, or the Wisdom of Jesus ben-Sira.

The Law, the earliest and the most sacred canon, comprises the five Mosaic books (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), usually called the Pentateuch. It is noteworthy that this collection contains as much history as it does law. Similarly the second canon, the Prophets, contains not only the four books of prophetic sermons and oracles, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve (considered as one book), but also the historical books from Joshua to 2 Kings. When one rids himself of the idea of the prophets as "foreteller" rather than "forth-teller," this seems not unnatural. These historical books are a history or a series of

histories written, as indeed are most of the historical portions of the Pentateuch, from a prophetic point of view. They are called the "Earlier Prophets," the four books of prophetic sermons being denominated the "Later Prophets."

In the third canon, the Writings, or Hagiographa,[1] are to be found not only the books which might be expected there, but also the priestly history or histories: Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah; Ruth and Lamentations; Daniel.

This surprising classification of Daniel corresponds somewhat to the distinct character of the book. If one read Amos at a sitting and then turn to Daniel, he finds himself passing almost into a different world—much more so indeed than if he turn from Amos to Jonah. But if, having passed from Amos to Daniel, one turn again to Joel or Zephaniah, or Zechariah 9-14, Isaiah 24-27 or Ezekiel 38 and 39, connecting links between the two are found. Another series of connecting links, more from the standpoint of literary form, is to be found by reading successively Amos 9:1-4, Isaiah 6, Ezekiel 1; also Amos 7:7 and Zechariah 2:1-5, Amos 8:1-3 and Ezekiel 37.

Compare Zechariah 1:7-11 and 6:1-8 with Revelation 6:1-8.

If time allows, adopt the suggestions just given of reading, first, Amos and Daniel and then the mediating passages, writing on a flyleaf of your text the impressions you get.

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[1]This word is merely a transliteration of the Greek words for "Holy Writings."

¶2. The book of Daniel divides itself very naturally into parts—a narrative introduction and a series of visions. Some visions appear, indeed, in the first part of the book; but they are introductory, and their significance is often missed by failing to observe their introductory character. The main purpose of the first six chapters is not to urge moral courage, the superiority of the law, and the like, but to show that the loyal Jew who speaks in Daniel 7 to 12 is a trustworthy prophet, and that the God of Daniel will reward loyalty to himself and his law and can and will perform what Daniel predicts. The lessons of courage and the superiority of the law are subordinate to the clarion call for faith in the God of Daniel.

¶3. Daniel and his fellows, true to the regimen of the law, prove superior to the non-Hebrew candidates to become wise men.

Read Daniel 1.

¶4. In a notable test case, Daniel alone of the wise men proves equal to the task of recalling the king's dream.

Read Daniel 2:1-48.

The king may have been toying with his wise men, knowing full well the dream; but having been so puzzled with their previous ambiguous and unverifiable interpretations of dreams (verse 9), he wishes to test out their real ability as soothsayers and diviners; or he may have really forgotten the dream, but have felt himself able to recognize it if some one should tell it to him.

Daniel not only proves equal to the task, but

takes occasion to assert that his ability is due to the superior power of his God (verses 27-30).

The meaning of the dream, in keeping with verse 21, which may be considered the text of the book of Daniel, is that this God of the Jews and of heaven and earth is fashioning history according to his will; that the present world empire will be succeeded by others, like it relatively short-lived, and then will come a permanent kingdom expressing God's own ideal social order. This was a great sweep of faith to people to whom a great world empire seemed so powerful and age-long.

¶5. The God of Daniel can and will deliver from the fiery furnace those who are faithful to him.

Read Daniel 2:49 to 3:30.

¶6. Daniel interprets a dream that is fulfilled completely, the fulfillment being illustrative of the temporariness and smallness of human kings. The great king of Babylon is through these events converted to the true God.

Read Daniel 4. Compare Jonah 3.

¶7. A strange writing on the wall is interpreted by Daniel, who survives the change of empires that he foresaw.

Read Daniel 5.

¶8. The God of Daniel not only shows his prophet how to predict, but delivers him even from a den of lions. Another king of another empire acknowledges the true and living God and makes a decree in his favor.

Read Daniel 6.

¶9. The great vision of the course and culmination of world history.

Read Daniel 7.

(*a*) This chapter plunges into the main subject and purpose of the book to which the preceding chapters have paved the way. It plunges also into the midst of a type of literature whose shallows have already been sounded, but whose depths and expanse are to be found, so far as the Old Testament is concerned, only in the book of Daniel. This literature, from the Greek word ἀποκάλυψις (apocalypsis), meaning "a laying bare, an uncovering, a revelation," is called apocalyptic.[a] It usually refers to that species of prophetic literature that goes beyond present moral and religious issues and intermediate judgments of God in history to his final judgment upon the present historical order and his setting of the course of things as they ought to be and as he wishes them to be.

Through the darkness of current conditions Apocalyptic looks to a glorious future brought on by God's working independent of human aid. Man merely waits on the Lord in faith, obedience, and trust. Apocalyptic tends to use the written rather than the spoken word and to employ highly colored

[a]This may not be the logical, but it is deemed the psychological and pedagogical place to discuss the subject of apocalyptic. The instructor should remember that the present study is not an attempt to study the various phases of Biblical literature, but the Bible itself. Such a study involves a knowledge of the various phases of the literature just where it will throw most light upon the Bible text itself.

visions and pictures and symbolic language. It aims at a vindication of God—a theodicy—but in this it is not different from other forms of prophecy when they turn to the problems rather than the duties of life.* Apocalyptic makes its supreme appeal to faith in God and God's control of history, and urges a mood of steadfast loyalty to God as an outcome of this faith. The outstanding representatives of Apocalyptic are Daniel in the Old Testament, 2 Esdras in the Apocrypha, Enoch,[1] preëminently, in the other late Jewish writings, and Revelation in the New Testament. Unless, however, one's definition be quite narrow, Joel, Zephaniah, Zechariah 9 to 14, Isaiah 24 to 27, as well as other shorter passages in the Old Testament, and Mark 13 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and others in the New, must be included.

It is certainly true that the deep things of God are spiritually discerned and often by ignorant and unlearned men, but it may be fairly said that an intelligent Christian should not unwarily trust interpreters of Daniel and Revelation who do not understand that these books are specimens of a type of literature widely prevalent in later Judaism and early Christianity, and who have not studied thor-

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*Compare, for example, Isaiah 10 and 53, the book of Habakkuk, and even Amos 1 and 2. The whole phophetic history, furthermore, is as much an endeavor "to justify the ways of God to men" through a philosophy of past history as Apocalyptic is by positing a future judgment.

[1]Quoted in the New Testament book of Jude, verse 14.

oughly both the Biblical and the non-Biblical Apocalypses.

One other point should be made just here. It has been customary in certain quarters to regard Daniel and Apocalypses generally as a much lower spiritual product than such prophecies as those of Amos. For the book of Daniel, however, to have reflected the message of Amos would have made its author a mere pessimistic calamity-howler. The age of Amos demanded arraignment and insistence on a strict social morality; the age of Daniel needed preëminently a message of hope and faith. Compare Ezekiel's rather sudden change of front when fortunes of his people reached the lowest ebb. (§23, ¶1).

(*b*) No more classic specimen of Apocalyptic than the seventh chapter of Daniel can be found. The first kingdom, typified by the lion with eagle's wings, is generally understood to be the Babylonian; with regard to the others there are two main opinions. One view takes the second or "bear" kingdom to be that of the Medes; the third, the Persian; and the fourth, the kingdom of the unnamable beast, to be the Grecian. The other view regards the bear kingdom as that of the Medo-Persian, considered as one, the leopard kingdom as the Grecian, and the fourth kingdom as the Roman. In both views the object of the vision is the same: it is to say that all of these kingdoms and the succession of them are merely incidents in the plan of God, however little it may seem so at any moment. Though Right and Truth seem

"forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne,

Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own."

Compare Daniel 7:9-12 and 2:21. After these kingdoms, that may be fitly represented by ravenous beasts, have had their day, there shall come a kingdom, or as some think a king, like unto a man, or a son of man, to use the Aramaic phrase—a kingdom human, not beastly, and coming not out of the monster-producing deep (verse 3), but on the clouds of heaven. This shall be a kingdom after God's own heart, and its dominion shall be forever. Such is the wide sweep and ultimate outlook of Apocalyptic at its best.

The view that holds the second kingdom to be the Medo-Persian, and the fourth Rome, feels that after Rome had had her day the Christ came in literal fulfillment of the prophecy. The other view frequently insists that Apocalyptic must not be made to go on all fours, and that even Jesus professed not to know "the day and the hour." Apocalyptic should be taken in this view as an effort of the prophetic mind to reach out in terms of its own age after the glory that shall be. Successive visions enlarge and spiritualize the viewpoint of those that are past. So, it holds, the Davidic-kingdom and the Davidic-king emphasis recedes behind the Son-of-Man idea; that the "enemies . . . biting the dust" view of Israelitish conquest gives way to the missionary ideals of the book of Jonah; and that even of John the Baptist Jesus could say in effect, "Though no

greater prophet than John has arisen, yet he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he"; and John's ideas of a Messiah whose fan is in his hand must give place to a Messiah who heals the sick and preaches to the poor (Luke 3:17, 4:18, 19, 7:22, 23, and 28).

Each view feels that Apocalyptic has a message for the present moment. One finds literal "signs" in the great war and the capture of Jerusalem. The other view feels that in an enlarged but not literal way the great war is the birth-pangs of a new era and a milestone along the road to the permanent peace of the kingdom of God—that is, to such a social order as God has had in mind all along and has revealed through his prophets in terms of the understanding of successive ages.[1]

¶10. The vision of the Antiochian persecution.

There is no reason to doubt that the "little horn" of Daniel 8:9 represents Antiochus Epiphanes. To appreciate this chapter one must understand how important a period in Jewish—and, indeed, in all religious—history, the age of the Antiochian persecution was. It is quite unfortunate that when Protestants rejected the apocryphal books from the canon of Scripture they neglected to read them

[1]It is not the purpose of the present study to take sides on such questions, though one may sometimes guess as to where the author's sympathy lies. This lengthy statement has been deemed necessary in order to make the alternative views plain. For further interpretations and discussions one must be referred to the Commentaries and Monographs.

at all. They have in this way deprived themselves of a flood of light that might have illumined greatly the problems of both the Old and the New Testaments. The more thoughtful student could not do better than to secure a copy of the Apocrypha, preferably in the Revised Version, and read carefully the first book of Maccabees. During this period, when the Greco-Syrian tyrant, in his attempt to stamp out the religion of the Jews, polluted the temple and "took away the continual burnt offering," Judaism faced perhaps the most critical hour of its history.

Whatever view one may take of the questions of the date and authorship of the book of Daniel, the eighth chapter is a ringing call to faith in the temporariness of the dominion of sacrilege and persecution, and in the ultimate triumph of the right and of humble devoutness over the might of empire.

With these points in mind,

Read Daniel 8.

¶11. The great prayer of confession: one of the prime forerunners of Paul's doctrine of God's free grace.

Noting especially verses 11 and 18,

Read Daniel 9:1-19.

Compare carefully the doctrine here reflected with the teaching of Paul, particularly in Romans.

¶12. The seventy years and the final vision.

Read Daniel 9:20-27 and chapters 10 to 12.

An even partially intelligible discussion of the problems of these visions would require, not a few,

but many paragraphs. Not because of any desire to evade them (for in a future work the author hopes to return sometime to them); but, because of the plan of the present work, the student desiring further aid in the interpretation of these chapters and, indeed, of Daniel and Apocalyptic in general, is referred to the following books for the several points of view:

For the conservative: Deane, "Daniel, His Life and Times."

For the Millenarian: A. C. Gabelein, "The Prophet Daniel."

For the critical: Frank C. Porter, "The Messages of the Apocalyptical Writers."

The fair-minded student should seek to weigh carefully all these viewpoints and to be tolerant and generous to students whose views differ from his own.

¶13. The book of Daniel, as has been seen, consists of two parts: the former mainly narrative, the latter a series of visions. This arrangement of narrative introducing prophecy, finding its prototype in Hosea, becomes a normal one in Apocalyptic. Though the narrative portion is designed as an introduction to the remainder, it frequently has its own independent messages. The first half of Daniel certainly inculcates the idea that the regimen of the law is superior for the Jews to that of the heathen; and it urges Jews, therefore, to hold fast their religion and to prefer death to apostasy. Still more does it aim to set forth the powerlessness of the heathen gods and the power of Jehovah to deliver

his own. Chapter 5 aims to record, perhaps, an especial judgment upon a king who profaned the temple vessels.

The most significant aspect, however, of the first six chapters of Daniel, taken by themselves, is its picture of the moral courage of the four Hebrews and especially of Daniel. Just as the Greek Alcestis and Penelope have become the world's figures for wifely faithfulness, Clytemnestra for womanly perfidy, Shakespeare's Caliban for beastliness and Iago for villainy, and Hamlet, Becky Sharp, Uriah Heep, and others, each for his own type, so the ideal picture of moral courage has ever been Daniel. So determined, yet so calm and sure of himself, he was: "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile hinself: . . . therefore"—what? "Therefore," one would expect to read, "he issued an ultimatum"; but no—"therefore he requested" (Dan. 1:8). Compare 6:10. In Daniel one realizes Bayard Taylor's ideal that "The bravest are the tenderest." So Luther goes to Worms, though every tile on the housetops were a devil; yet, standing before the tribunal, there is no defiance, but a calm "I can do no other." Always the highest courage is without bluster. "Dare to be a Daniel" says everything that needs to be said on moral courage.

Yet it must be insisted that this ideal as well as the other considerations mentioned above are secondary in the first six chapters of the book of Daniel. The instinct of the older interpreters went straighter to the heart of the book than the modern historical and ethical interest. When Freeborn Garretson

was threatened with punishment, he did not find his inspiration in the courage, but rather in the faith, of Daniel: "The God of Daniel will take care of me," he said. So the old-fashioned song does not urge one to "Dare to be a Daniel," but insists that the "Old-time religion" was "good enough for the prophet Daniel."

With these points in mind, and considering the first six chapters as intending to show Daniel's ability as a prophet and the power of God to deliver those who are true and loyal to him, and getting the assurance and sweep of the message of the book in the light of your entire study,

Read at a sitting the book of Daniel.

CHAPTER XI

THE LEGAL AND PRIESTLY ENACTMENTS AND IDEALS

§ 33. The Legal and Priestly Element of Exodus.

¶1. The survey of the prophetic oracles and sermons has now been completed. The main purpose has been to study, not the prophetic movement, but the prophetic messages contained in the prophetic books themselves. This has, of course, involved some consideration of the movement called prophetism. Back of the earliest writing prophets there is a long prophetic development, traces of which are found in the historical books and are treated to a degree in the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History." It is not feasible to go further into this development. Likewise, the later issue of the prophetic spirit in Jewish apocalyptic as well as its influence upon Jewish scribism must be passed over.

Alongside the prophet, however, from the earliest times stood the priest and the priestly interest, and this priestly interest has left its impress upon the life and literature of the Old Testament. In the earlier prophetic books the prophet makes a broadside attack upon the priest and the popular worship, for it is not the prophets or priests of Baal that Amos attacks, but the worshipers at the chief shrines of Israel. Likewise Hosea, champion as he was of the strictest religious loyalty rather than of the social and ethical program of Amos, utters from Jehovah the meaningful warning, "I desire goodness, and not

sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."* Isaiah seems even more wholesale than his predecessors in his insistence upon the ethical as over against the ritual; but, as has been seen, Isaiah's relation to the temple marks a new era in the alliance of the prophetic and priestly in Old Testament religion. This alliance is further cemented by the coöperation of priest and prophet in the reformation under Josiah. Jeremiah, though himself of priestly descent, seems to stand in this regard in the succession of Amos rather than of Isaiah, but the union of priestly and prophetic becomes an established fact in Ezekiel. It must not be forgotten, however, that Ezekiel represents a priestliness purified of attachment to the local shrines and their not-infrequently debasing practices. The subsequent development may be regarded, according to one's viewpoint, as the priestly conquest of prophetism or as a uniquely successful permeation of the priestly by the prophetic spirit.

Some of the Old Testament laws are of a civil and secular character; but as so large a portion of them deal with priestly enactments, and as the priests seem to have become the guardians of civil law, it is customary to regard the Old Testament law as a part of the priestly element.

¶2. Before entering into the priestly and legal portions of Exodus, it is well to glance at the priestly and legal aspects of Genesis. Genesis is history rather than law, but its author is interested in the

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*Hosea 6:6.

origin not only of the Hebrew race but of their basic religious institutions as well.

(*a*) The very account of creation itself finds its climax in the hallowing of the Sabbath.

Read Genesis 2:1-3.

(*b*) Central in the story of Abraham's life is the covenant of circumcision.

Read Genesis 17.

These two are the fundamental ceremonial institutions of Judaism, and their significant position in the book of Genesis must not be overlooked. An interesting, fanciful rewriting of the Genesis story, magnifying these and other institutions, is found in the apocryphal book of Jubilees.

(*c*) The other priestly-legal aspects of Genesis of most importance are Jacob's pledge of the tithe (28:22) and the sacrifices of Cain and Abel, of Noah, and of Abraham, with the climax in the offering of Isaac.

It is these several emphases on the Sabbath, circumcision, the tithes and sacrifice, it seems, that give Genesis its right to a place in the first Jewish canon of scripture, "The Law."

¶3. The Passover: next to circumcision and the Sabbath, the central religious institution of the Hebrews.

(*a*) It is necessary, especially in the treatment of Exodus and Numbers, to suggest the reading of some passages whose historical aspects are treated in the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," the reading of some longer passages being recommended and that of some shorter ones insisted upon as

inherently necessary to the understanding of the priestly and legal viewpoints. It would be well, in order to appreciate the Passover more fully, to

Read at a sitting Exodus 7:14 to 11:10.

In any case,

(*b*) Read Exodus 12:1 to 13:16.

Answer in your own words the following questions: What does the Passover celebrate? How is it observed? What respectively do the lamb and the unleavened bread symbolize? Who partakes of the Passover (12:43-50)? What is the law of the first-born? And what is its connection with the Pass-over?

¶4. The Ten Commandments.

(1) Perhaps the first Hebrew canon, or "Bible," the precursor of the Pentateuch and its canonization as "The Law," was, it has been well said, "The Commandments." Two very similar versions of the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments,[8] are found in the Pentateuch, Exodus 20:2-17 and Deuteronomy 5:6-21. The chief points of interest in comparing the two versions are in the reason assigned for the observance of the Sabbath and the order of items in the tenth commandment.

(*a*) Read Exodus 20:11 and Deuteronomy 5:14*b*, 15.

What is the difference? Which represents the more priestly and which the more prophetic view-

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[8]The consideration of another Decalogue that some scholars think to find in Exodus is, like many other such problems, beyond the scope of the present study.

point? What do you think of the two ideals here evinced?

(*b*) Read also Exodus 20:17 and Deuteronomy 5:21.

The word "house" in each case does not mean, probably, the material house, but the household. In Exodus the wife seems to be considered the chief item in the man's household alongside of, yet above, the servants and the animals. This reflects a more primitive ideal. Recall the social life of Abraham and Jacob. Deuteronomy represents a higher point of view. The wife is here higher than and separate from the "servants" and animals. Remember that the servants are not those who are paid wages, but dependents and slaves, another indication of the primitive situation, the misunderstanding of which fact made many Southern leaders defend slavery as a Christian institution.

(2) Now read Exodus 20:1-17.

Memorize these commandments, if you do not already know them—or would you prefer to memorize the Deuteronomic version? At any rate, now read the latter, Deuteronomy 5:6-21. The first four commandments are usually thought of as commanding duties to God; the remaining six, duties to one's fellow men. Some scholars think the first five represent duties to God, the relation to parents being considered by ancient peoples as having a religious character not accorded to one's relation to his neighbors.

There is some difference in the various versions

and texts as to the numbering of the Ten Commandments: see the commentaries on this point.

(3) Does Exodus 20:2 set forth Jehovah as the supreme God of all the earth? Or does it reflect a less broad ideal than, say, 1 Kings 18:39 or the book of Jonah or of Daniel? The early religion of Israel is not based on God's creatorship, but on his deliverance and salvation. Recall your previous study of the Bible, asking this question, How far is gratitude to God as creator, and how far is gratitude to him as savior and deliverer the leading religious motive? Keep this question in mind in your future study. What is the meaning of the first commandment?

(4) How far is the punishment threatened in the second commandment and how far the reward offered in the second and fifth social? how far individual? What is the Pauline view of the uniqueness of the fifth and of the tenth commandment (Eph. 6:2 and Rom. 7:7)?

(5) The thunderings of Sinai.

Read Exodus 20:18-21.

¶5. What especial exhortations concerning worship are given?

Read Exodus 20:22-26.

¶6. Certain social laws concerning Hebrew slaves (21:1-11); injuries to persons (21:12-32); and offenses against property (21:33 to 22:15).

Read Exodus 21:1 to 22:15.

What spirit is reflected in these laws? and what stage of civilization? What would you say of the social ideals reflected in 21:7? Note especially the sacredness of the "oath of Jehovah" in 22:11.

¶7. Certain miscellaneous laws.

Read Exodus 22:16 to 23:19.

Some scholars think that Exodus 22:16, 17 belongs with the preceding rather than with the following verses, as being an offense against property: compare the way "wife" is placed after "house" in Exodus 20:17. What do you think of this view?

Note that the sympathy for the poor and defenseless found in the prophetic writings is reflected here also. Observe especially the provision against "interest"; for this, not "exorbitant interest" is the meaning. What sort of an economic situation does this indicate?

¶8. What are the threats and promises annexed to these laws?

Read Exodus 23:20-33.

¶9. The sealing of the covenant and the vision of God.

Read Exodus 24.

From 24:7 the preceding portion (Ex. 20:22 to 23:33) of the book is often called the "Book of the Covenant."

¶10. Instructions concerning the tabernacle.

(1) The order to build a sanctuary by popular collection.

Read Exodus 25:1-7.

(2) What are the chief sacred paraphernalia? Noting particularly verses 10 (with 19), 23, and 31,

Read Exodus 25:8-40.

(3) The tabernacle itself.

Read Exodus 26.

Notice especially the holy place, also the holy of

holies, with the ark and its mercy seat, in verses 31-37.

(4) The altar and the court and the continually lighted lamp.

Read Exodus 27.

(5) The priests, their vestments and the ceremony of their consecration.

Read Exodus 28:1 to 29:37.

(6) The continual burnt offering and the promise of the presence of Jehovah.

Read Exodus 29:38-46.

Recall the importance of this to Daniel, the most horrible of calamities being its discontinuance.

(7) The altar of incense, the ransom tax, the laver of brass, the anointing oil, and the incense.

Read Exodus 30:1 to 31:11.

(8) Two special injunctions concerning the Sabbath.

Read Exodus 31:12-17 and 35:1-3.

¶11. The remaining portion of Exodus is history rather than law, but it is history immediately connected with the worship and the tabernacle. Part of it is treated in the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," but should be read here also to understand the setting of the tabernacle worship. One section of pure legal enactment has been very much discussed amongst scholars and deserves separate notice, though a discussion of it is beyond the present purpose. One who wishes at this time to pursue the point must be referred to the commentaries.

(1) Read Exodus 34:14-26.

(2) Now read rapidly Exodus 31:18 to 40:38.

¶12. Perhaps the student may tire of being told that problems met are beyond the scope of the present study, but one needs to be reminded of how limitless are the treasures and the perplexities of Bible study—as indeed of the total range of knowledge. Certainly one needs to be so reminded at this point, for a satisfactory treatment of the legal element of Exodus and Numbers and of the whole book of Leviticus involves many phases and unlimited comparisons. One can aim now only at a general idea.

It must be confessed, on the other hand, that even a general idea of Hebrew ritual and worship is more than most Bible students have, and it should be the aim of the student to see that such a general idea remains as a permanent possession. It is a mistake to feel with many extreme Protestants that these laws, having been done away in Christ, are no longer worthy of attention; or with some advanced critics that the priestly inspiration and insight are so far beneath or so definitely opposed to the prophetic that the whole priestly literature is worthless or even a clog upon religion.

Religion is not merely ethics, however exalted; it is fellowship with God. The ultimate test of a religion includes not only the question how well it makes a man deal in relation to his fellows, but how thoroughly it makes him feel at home in the universe; how fully it gives meaning to individual and communal existence and makes life seem worth living; and how deep and abiding and ultimately good an experience it gives to the soul. What is the use of

being generous and kind to the less fortunate if the best that can be done for them is to raise them to a capacity for an experience and view of life that is essentially unsatisfactory and unsatisfying?

The test of worship is not what it can do for God, who needeth not the service of men's hands, but whether it can bring into the soul of man a sense of the divine presence and a justifiable sense of the right sort of Divine Presence. A worship that brings into a hard-hearted, unbrotherly soul a sense of fellowship with God, or that brings perfectly a sense of the Divine, but of a "Divine" that is unkindly and forbidding, is certainly of less value than a worship that, demanding righteousness and brotherliness, brings into the heart a sense of the presence of the Divine Father.

The proper worship of to-day may be very simple and the service may be largely given over to the prophetic sermon, though it is surely (is it not?) a false emphasis that counts the opening worship "preliminaries"; or it many be of a more didactic synagogue-like, intellectualistic sort; or an elaborate ritual ceremony: this is not the problem. Rather the problem is to get the spirit and meaning of the ancient Hebrew worship. Sketch again paragraphs 10 and 11 and the Biblical material referred to in them and ask yourself how adequate this ancient worship was for its task. Compare it in ethical outlook and in religious possibilities with what you know of other ancient worships. Consider the realities, as far as you can conjecture them, that the various phases symbolize, and ask yourself how far these

symbols and these realities were valuable and adequate.

With the Exodus description of Hebrew ceremony in mind and for an appreciation of its worship-value,

Read again Isaiah 6.

Compare the feeling of worshipful awe that comes over one on entering a great European cathedral or the spiritual aid of external surroundings in a modern sunrise prayer meeting.

Keep the attitude of this discussion in mind in your further study of the priestly element, remembering, moreover, that Christian theology is built not merely upon the doctrines of the prophets but upon the values and heart needs voiced in the Old Testament ritual as well. Compare especially the New Testament "Epistle to the Hebrews."

§ 34. Leviticus.

¶1. The five chief types of offering. Observing that 6:8 to 7:38 is largely a set of additional precepts concerning these five types, taking them in a slightly different order,

Read Leviticus 1 to 7.

What are these five types?

¶2. The priestly consecration and priestly duties and portions.

Read Leviticus 8 to 10.

The most of this passage is referred to, also, in the study of the history.

¶3. Laws of purification.

Says Kennedy:

One of the oldest and most important functions of the Hebrew priesthood was . . . to "put difference between the holy and common, and between the clean and the unclean." . . . This difference is the main subject of the following chapters, in which "the subject of sacrifice, with which the priesthood is first concerned (chapters 1 to 10), now makes way for the treatment of uncleanness and purification under four heads: Animals, 11; childbirth, 12; leprosy, 13 to 14; issues, 15." . . . As regards the subject matter of this division of Leviticus, it has been truly said that "among the varied religious acts of man there is probably none that has been so widely prevalent throughout the different races of mankind as the ritual of purification, nor does any idea seem to have possessed so strong a legislative power in the various departments of our life as the concept of purity.*

Now read Leviticus 11 to 15.

Which of these laws had quarantine value? Observe how, in 12:8 and 14:21, the Hebrew priest, like the Hebrew prophet, considers the poor.

None of these topics call for detailed consideration here; again the student is referred to the commentaries and special treatises.

¶4. The Day of Atonement.

The early sacrifices of the Hebrews seem to have been joyous religious feasts: the more somber character of the Mosaic ritual was the result of a prophetic moralization with its deeper sense of sin. "The unique and impressive ritual of the Day of Atonement, to retain the current designation, is the culmination and crown," says Kennedy, "of the

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*The New Century Bible, "Leviticus," page 81.

sacrificial worship of the Old Testament."* It stands along with circumcision and the Sabbath (§33, ¶2), the Passover (§33 ¶3), and the daily offering (§33, ¶10 (6)). Keeping these four institutions in mind,

Read Leviticus 16.

Compare the religious significance of this ritual with the prayer of Daniel (§32, ¶11). For the New Testament symbolism of the Passover and the Day of Atonement,

Read 1 Corinthians 5:7, 8 and Hebrews 9.

¶5. The Holiness Code.

(1) The first seven chapters of Leviticus, as has been seen, present laws relating to the five types of offerings; the second section (8 to 10) recounts the consecration of the Aaronic priesthood; then come the laws concerning purification (chapters 11 to 15), culminating in the Day of Atonement, which from its importance was treated as a separate section. The remaining portion, with chapter 27 considered either as an appendix to the section or to the entire book, has usually been called the Holiness Code. Let the student notice how frequently the words "holy," "defile," "profane," and the like occur, and how fully the ideal of holiness dominates the section. Compare especially 19:2 and 1 Peter 1:15, 16.

(2) The most significant portion of the Holiness Code is chapter 19, the high-water mark of the ethics of the priestly element. Observing particularly its attitude toward the poor and the sojourner, its insistence upon just weights and measures, and its

*Book cited, page 110.

injunction, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,"

Read Leviticus 19.

On "Who is my neighbor?" compare verses 18 and 34.

Note that all of these principles have a religious ground: "I am Jehovah your God."

(3) Closely akin to these laws and the prophetic ideals of non-oppression of the poor are the land, interest, and slavery laws.

Read Leviticus 25.

Remember that usury means, not exorbitant interest, but any interest. In a non-industrial social organization money is not borrowed from bankers to make more money, but from friends to tide over financial straits. Compare Jesus's parable of the talents in the days of the bankers, where "mine own with usury" seemed a natural and a justifiable claim.

(4) Read chapters 18 and 20, laws chiefly concerned with sexual purity. These seem a mass of details, but life is filled with particular cases, and this codification must have formed many standards that greatly protected Israel.

(5) Laws concerning sacrifice, the priesthood, and the sacred seasons.

Read Leviticus 17, 21, 22, and 23; also sketch chapter 25 again for its announcement of sacred seasons: it has already been considered from the standpoint of its humanitarian laws.

(6) Laws concerning the sacred oil, the shewbread, and the sin of blasphemy.

Read Leviticus 24.

(7) The appendix on vows.

Read Leviticus 27.

(8) The hortatory address. What are the promises and penalties attached to the Holiness Code?

Read Leviticus 26.

Compare Malachi 3:10-12, Isaiah 1:10-20, Haggai 1:7-11, Amos 2:6-8 and 4:1-12.

Note the doctrine of 26:44. Compare the similar conception in the prophets, in the Apocrypha, and in Romans 11.

§ 35. The Legal-Priestly Portions of Numbers.

¶ 1. Commenting on Leviticus 1:1, Adam Clarke's commentary says of Leviticus: "From the manner in which the book commences, it appears plainly to be a continuation of the preceding; and, indeed, the whole is but *one law*, though divided into five portions, and why thus divided it is not easy to be conjectured."* In his commentary on Numbers, George Buchanan Gray is more specific:

> The first section of Numbers (1:1 to 10:10) may be regarded as an appendix to the books of Exodus and Leviticus. The arrival of the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai is recorded in Exodus 19:1, their departure therefrom in Numbers 10:11 f. (33); and thus the scene of all that lies between these two passages is the same. Not only so, the main subjects of Exodus 19:1 to Numbers 10:11 are closely related, and, indeed, parts of a single conception—the due organization of the people with a view to securing the sanctifying presence of Yahweh in their midst. The closing chapters of Exodus are primarily connected with the building of the taber-

*Vol. I., page 506, "New Edition with the Author's Final Corrections"; Eaton and Mains, New York.

nacle for the divine presence; Leviticus, with the institution of the sacrificial system, by means of which the people were to approach Yahweh, and of the priesthood, the members of which were to be the immediate ministers of Yahweh; the opening chapters on Numbers, with the institution of the Levites, who were to be the ministers of the priests, and with the arrangement of the camp in such manner as to symbolize the holiness and unapproachableness of Yahweh. At present all three sections of Exodus 19:1 to Numbers 10:10 contain also miscellaneous laws and regulations not closely related to the main conception (see chiefly Exodus 20 to 23, Leviticus 17 to 26, Numbers 5 f.); but this ought not to obscure the essential unity of the whole. Clearly, then, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers might have been more suitably, though very unequally, divided as follows: (1) Exodus 1 to 18, The Exodus from Egypt to Sinai; (2) Exodus 19 to Numbers 10:10, Sinai; (3) Numbers 10: 11 to 36:13, From Sinai to the Jordan.*

¶2. The separation of the tribe of Levi and its special commission.

Read Numbers 1:47-54 and 2:17, and sketch Numbers 3:1-39.

Compare the second census,

Reading Numbers 26:57-62.

¶3. The significance and duties, and the census of the Levites between the ages of thirty and fifty.

Read Numbers 3:40 to 4:49.

What was the significance of the Levites—whose place did they take?

It is noteworthy that not the so-called book of Leviticus but the book of Numbers busies itself the more with the affairs of the Levites.

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*Page xxiv.

¶4. The ordeal of jealousy and the law of the Nazarite, following short references to matters in a measure already treated.

Read Numbers 5:1 to 6:21.

What is the method of the ordeal? What is a Nazarite?

¶5. Learn by heart the Priestly Blessing.

Read Numbers 6:22-27.

Compare the New Testament benedictions: 2 Corinthians 13:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:28, Hebrews 13:20, 21, 1 Peter 5:14*b*, Romans 1:7, etc.

¶6. The offerings of the chieftains and the consecration of the Levites.

Read Numbers 7 and 8.

What are the ages of service and superannuation of the Levites?

¶7. A special case adjudicated.

Read Numbers 9:1-14.

After all, law is not a series of general principles or of statutory enactments, but a series of interpretations of special situations. It was a wise judge who said, "I care not who makes your laws, if I interpret them." The general practice of the courts is the supreme law of the land.

Compare Numbers 27:1-11 for a similar judicial precedent on inheritance through the female line. Later an additional problem arises upon this one.

Read Numbers 36.

¶8. Instead of the quaint tribal family altar of Abraham's day, a delineation of a mighty moving worship appears. The arrangement within the tabernacle, the disposition of the priest and the Levites,

and the character of the chief offerings have been studied. Now, recalling these,

Read Numbers 9:15 to 10:10 and 10:33-36.

Consider the awe-inspiring character of such a scene.

¶9. Miscellaneous laws.

Noting especially the provision of sacrifice for unwitting sin and the severity toward willful sin,

Read Numbers 15.

¶10. "Aaron's rod that budded," the priestly preeminence and the priestly support.

Read Numbers 17 and 18.

Compare 18:21 with §33, ¶2 (*c*).

¶11. How was ritual defilement caused by touching of a dead body removed?

Read Numbers 19.

¶12. The list of offerings for the national community.

Note that first and fundamental is the daily offering; then the special days, the Sabbath, the first of the month, the first of the seventh month, the Day of Atonement on the tenth of the seventh month; then the three special feasts.

Read chapters 28 and 29.

¶13. What are the special regulations with regard to vows of women? Noting that verse 9 seems parenthetical,

Read Numbers 30.

¶14. What was the law of division of booty?

Read Numbers 31.

¶15. In the general allotment of territory what provision is made for the Levites?

Read Numbers 35:1-8.

¶16. The legislation feels out toward a higher law concerning homicide.

Read Numbers 35:9-34.

Says Gray:

In three important respects the present law modifies the ancient custom: (1) It insists that life is to be forfeited only in case of willful murder; in primitive custom it makes no difference whether loss of life was due to malice or accident; in either case loss had been inflicted on one family by another, and it was the duty of the *goel* to see that that loss was made good. (2) The law tacitly insists that the life of the actual murderer only can become forfeit. In primitive custom it was a matter of indifference whether the loss inflicted on a family was made good by shedding the blood of the actual homicide or another member of his family. (3) The law forbids the acceptance of a money equivalent for a forfeited life. But in spite of these important modifications the law is transitional; it still leaves the exaction of the forfeited life to the *goel had-dam*, the representative of the family, instead of making it the duty of a representative of the whole community; and thus it does not abolish the ancient family institution, but simply modifies and regulates it in the larger interests of the State. In the case of accidental homicide the community or State prevents the *goel* discharging his duty to his family; in case of murder, it insists that he shall discharge that duty in a particular way—viz., by taking the life of the murderer. But though it thus remains to the last transitional, Hebrew law marks a very distinct advance by so modifying primitive custom as to secure an *adequate* punishment for the *individual* guilty of murder, and a clear distinction between accidental and willful homicide.*

So the Mosaic prescription concerning divorce,

*Book cited, page 471.

though an advance over primitive freedom of divorce, is yet, according to Jesus (Mark 10:2-9), far below the divine ideal.

§ 36. Deuteronomy.

¶ 1. Deuteronomy, like Ezekiel, represents a union of the prophetic with the priestly spirit. In the latter there appears a prophet in whom the priestly interest is central; in the former a law book surcharged with the prophetic spirit. Robinson says of it:

> The book of Deuteronomy can claim a unique place in the literature of the Old Testament, both on intrinsic and extrinsic grounds. Intrinsically, it is distinct from the narrative and historical, the legislative and ritual, the prophetic and devotional writings. Apart from the closing chapters, which are clearly of the nature of an appendix, the elements of direct narration are so slight as to be negligible; the review of history which the book contains is subordinated to a practical purpose. Though many laws are here recorded, they are for the most part so selected and presented as to be illustrations of a principle rather than elements in a code; whilst comparison with Leviticus will quickly convince the reader that the interest is moral rather than ritual. Affinity with certain of the prophets is unmistakable, nor is the tone of the book without many parallels in the devotional warmth of the Psalter; yet the unity of Deuteronomy is the product of principles rather than personalities, principles emerging in a national, not merely an individual, experience. In short, we may most aptly compare the sustained and illustrated exhortation of this book with a sermon, if only the parallel convey no prejudice of dullness. It is a sermon so reported as to preserve the spiritual warmth of a Bernard preaching the crusade, the flaming zeal of a Savonarola kindling the Florentine fire of vanities; whilst with this more pas-

sionate feeling against idolatry there is a noble humanitarianism, a consideration for the stranger and the helpless, an appeal to deep human sympathies, not unworthy of a Francis of Assisi. . . .

The book of Deuteronomy, as it now lies before us, consists of several addresses, professedly delivered by Moses to the Israelites in the land of Moab on the eve of their entrance into Palestine (1:1-5, 4:44-49, 9:1, 31:1 f.). To these are added four chapters (31 to 34) narrating the appointment of Joshua in place of Moses (31:3 f., 14 f.), the writing down by Moses of the law just given (verses 9 f., 24 f.), and the ascent by Moses, at the command of God, of Mount Nebo (Pisgah), where he dies (32:48 f., 34). In this narrative are incorporated two poems, the "Song" (chapter 32) and the "Blessing" (chapter 33), ascribed to Moses and to this particular occasion.*

¶2. As the narrative portions of Deuteronomy are not in point here, the main concern is with chapters 5-30: therefore

Sketch Deuteronomy 1 to 4, reading more carefully 1:9-17, 4:1-40, and 4:41-49.

Observe the emphasis upon religious education and upon freedom from idolatry.

¶3. The hortatory introduction to the second and principal address of Deuteronomy.

(1) The Deuteronomic version of the Ten Commandments has already been considered. Compare §33, ¶4.

(2) The deeper problem of life, however, is not one of law, but of regeneration. Comparing Jesus and Paul and noting particularly verse 29,

Read Deuteronomy 5:28-33.

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*New Century Bible, "Deuteronomy," pages 2 and 3.

(3) The "first and greatest commandment." Noting especially verse 4,

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

Driver heads his discussion of Deuteronomy 6:4, 5, "The fundamental truth of Israel's religion, the uniqueness and unity of Jehovah; and the fundamental duty founded upon it—viz., the devotion to him of the Israelite's entire being."* Jesus was not alone in calling this the greatest commandment: compare Luke 10:25-28. The command of verse 8 was taken literally in later Judaism, and the wearing of the phylacteries containing Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21 was obligatory upon every male Israelite at the ordinary morning prayer.**

(4) The purpose of the statutes is Israel's good; the ground of Israel's love and obedience is to be gratitude for redemption.

Read Deuteronomy 6:20-25.

(5) The former inhabitants of Canaan are to be exterminated to avoid polluting Israel's religion.

Read Deuteronomy 7:1-6, 16 and 22.

(6) Israel's superior blessings are not of works, but of grace. Comparing the spirit of Daniel 9,

Read Deuteronomy 7:7, 8, 14, 8:16, 17, 9:4-7.

(7) Israel is to make Jehovah the object of its faith and concern.

Read Deuteronomy 6:4 and 13-18, 7:9, 10, and 18, 8:3 and 11 and 15.

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*International Critical Commentary, "Deuteronomy," page 89.

**See Scheurer, "The Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ," Second Division, Vol. II., page 113.

(8) In Jehovah's commandment there is life; in disobedience is ruin.

Read Deuteronomy 5:33, 7:9-11, 11:26-28.

(9) Now read through connectedly the hortatory introduction to the second address, Deuteronomy 5 to 11, noting the points stressed above and others that impress you. Formulate carefully your idea of the passage and its place in Hebrew and in Christian religion.

¶4. The Deuteronomic Code and the centralization and protection of the religious life.

(1) There was no more far-reaching event in Israel's history than the centralization of the worship in Jerusalem. Through this reform the lower Canaanitish cults were overcome and Hebrew monotheism was enabled to become the religion of the people. There were dangers, of course, and rather fully were they realized in the later Jewish priestcraft; but it is hardly too much to say that such centralization was necessary to the preservation of the religion of the prophets.

Read Deuteronomy 12:1-14.

(2) In the settled agricultural conditions, centralization requires a relaxing of the custom of regarding every slaughtered animal as a religious sacrifice; but it demands especial enforcement of the prohibition of blood, which was fundamental to Israelitish ideals.

Read Deuteronomy 12:15-28.

(3) The Deuteronomic laws for the prevention of apostasy from Jehovah are very strict and severe.

Read Deuteronomy 12:29 to 13:18 and 16:21 to 17:7.

(4) Heathen customs of mourning for the dead and the eating of animals ceremonially unclean are prohibited.

Read Deuteronomy 14:1-21.

(5) What is the Deuteronomic law concerning the tithe?

Read Deuteronomy 14:22-29.

Notice the humanitarian character of the last provision.

(6) What still more significant humanitarian aspects has the Deuteronomic law?

Read Deuteronomy 15:1-18.

Observe that an especially likely danger is guarded against (verses 7 and 8).

(7) The law of firstlings.

Read Deuteronomy 15:19-23.

(8) The Deuteronomic statement of the three great feasts.

Read Deuteronomy 16:1-17.

¶ 5. The Deuteronomic Code continued: the leaders of the national and religious life.

The judges are enjoined to be just and impartial, and a central court for difficult cases is provided; the king must not be warlike nor dissolute, but he must follow the law; the priesthood must be supported; magic is to be eschewed and resort must be had to a prophet of the Mosaic type.

Read Deuteronomy 16:18-20 and 17:8 to 18:22.

¶6. The Deuteronomic Code continued: Miscellaneous laws.

(1) This section of the book, chapters 19 to 26, presents a group of miscellaneous laws. Among other things in these laws, several matters are worthy of remark.

(*a*) The Deuteronomic sympathy for the unfortunate: the mitigation of the treatment of captive women and of the less favored wife (21:10-17); the runaway slave (23:15 and 16); the poor man's pledge and regular payment of the hired man's wages (24:6 and 15); the law of gleanings (24:19-22); the unmuzzled ox (25:4).

(*b*) The reaching out toward a more adequate criminal law: the protection of the innocent manslayer and the punishment of the guilty through the law concerning the cities of refuge (19:1-13); the law of evidence (19:15-21);[a] the expiation of an "untraced murder" (21:1-9).

(*c*) The problem of sex relationships (other than the cases of captive women and less favored wives already considered); the law of divorce (24:1-4; compare §35, ¶16); the levirate marriage, so-called from the latin word "levir," a husband's brother (25:5-10).

(*d*) Certain liturgical and ecclesiastical laws on first fruits and the tithes (26:1-15).

(*e*) Now, noting whatever other laws especially impress you,

Read Deuteronomy 19 to 26.

[a]Compare the later safeguard set forth in the Apocryphal book, "The History of Susanna."

(2) Observe here, as also in the other legal books, that while some of the laws are distinctly priestly and that while the priest, like the scribe, later, was to a large degree the custodian of the law, nevertheless much of the law was distinctly civil and "secular." Remember also that Deuteronomy is really more prophetic than priestly in tone.

¶7. The next passage concerns the ratification of the law and pronounces certain solemn curses. Does it seem to you an interlude written in the third person, about Moses, not by him? Comparing verses 1, 9, and 11,

Read Deuteronomy 27.

¶8. The conclusion of the second Mosaic address: what seems to be the pith and point of it?

Read Deuteronomy 28 and 29:1.

¶9. What is the purport of the third Mosaic discourse?

Read Deuteronomy 29:2 to 30:20.

Observe again how the problem of the regeneration of human nature looms up beyond that of legal requirements and even of the more moral and non-ceremonial legal requirements (29:4, 30:6; compare 30:11-14). Compare Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Paul in the same strain.[1]

¶10. Now read at a sitting or two, or, if your Bible is well marked, sketch at a sitting the book of Deuteronomy, getting the general drift and character of the whole.

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[1]The remainder of the book of Deuteronomy is historical and is treated in the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History."

CHAPTER XII

THE PROPHETIC AND PRIESTLY NARRATIVES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

§ 37. The Prophetic and Priestly Histories.

¶ 1. It would not be amiss, after the study of the prophetic sermons and oracles and the priestly law, to consider in detail the prophetic history, Genesis to 2 Kings, and the priestly history, Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah. The treatment of these histories as a separate study, however, rather than here, is desirable, because they are not merely prophetic and priestly interpretations, but prophetic and priestly interpretations of historical sources that fell into the hands of the interpreters.* Sometimes, as in Joshua 10:13*b* and 1 Chronicles 29:29, sources are referred to by name, but more frequently they are not mentioned. Just as many of the laws embedded in the priestly literature are civil rather that priestly, so, while these histories are priestly and prophetic respectively, the simple stories of Saul and David, of Gideon and Jephthah and the like, show an original source where the chief interest and motive is the native love for a good story of the exploits of a national hero.

In the Old Testament, as so far considered, there

*Compare the author's "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History." The prophetic and priestly character of the histories is discussed there, especially in sections 3, 55, and 84 (pages 12, 13, 126-129, and 191-199).

are not two, but four, literary types or elements: the prophetic and the priestly, flowing out of the religious life of Israel; the legal, out of the political and judicial life; and what, from the lack of a better name, flowing out of the everyday life of the people, might be called the folk-literary. Each of these rises from a very primitive background. The folk-literary at its primitive and impersonal stage is called by a term against which, because of its modern associations, there is unreasonable prejudice, the term "folk-lore." From this more simple form it rises to great heights, just as the legal element, touched by the prophetic spirit, rises from early tribal custom to the humanitarian legislation of Deuteronomy. So the priestly system rises from the dark background of the human sacrifice, as is shown by the case of Jephthah's daughter and by the complaint of the Psalmist that his forefathers "mingled themselves with the nations, and learned their works. . . . Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto demons."* The basis for the higher view is laid in the story of Abraham's offering of Isaac, where the teaching seems to be that while Jehovah requires such devotion as would give up an only son for his sake, human sacrifice is to be banished from Israel. The higher stretches of the priestly ideal reach unto the two great commandments of love to God and one's neighbor, and unto the deepened sense of moral failure and the consciousness of forgiven sin. There is a far cry, likewise, from the proph-

*Psalm 106:35-38.

etism of Samuel, whom Saul consults concerning the stray asses (1 Sam. 9:5-10), and from Saul's prophetic frenzy (1 Sam. 19:23, 24), to the wonderful messages of the prophets of the eighth century whose books have been studied.

To return to the folk-literary elements, one might compare the way the rude riddle-couplets of Samson's primitive feast rise to the beauty of the Song of Songs, or the savage boast of Lamech rises to David's wonderful dirge over Saul and Jonathan with the way the songs of the medieval troubadours rise in European literature to the lyrics of Heine and Burns.

The folk-literary, like the politico-legal, element is to be found, with one possible exception, not in separate books, but embedded in the other elements. No finer specimen of this type is contained in any literature than the biographies of Saul and David included in the books of Samuel. This folk-literary material is taken up by the prophetic writers just as the legal material is taken up by the priestly interest. It is significant that the Jews called Joshua to 2 Kings the "Earlier Prophets," and regarded the books of prophetic sermons and oracles as the Later Prophets. The chief strain, also, of the historical portion of the Pentateuch is undoubtedly of the same prophetic nature as Joshua to 2 Kings, though there is in it a priestly strain besides.[1] In any case, just as Joshua to 2 Kings presents history interpreted

[1]Many modern scholars think they can isolate this priestly strain, which they assign to a hypothetical author or authors under the symbol "P."

from the prophetic standpoint, so a priestly history, where the interest centers in Jerusalem and the Temple, is found in Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah.

¶2. Now, with these points in mind and observing the prophetic use of the folk-literary elements by fitting them into such formulæ as Judges 4:1-3,

Read or sketch at a single sitting the book of Judges.[a]

¶3. Comparing the prophetic and priestly treatment of similar material,

Read or sketch at one or two sittings the books of 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles.

§ 38. The Prophetic and Priestly Books of Personal Narrative.

¶1. The histories just treated contain extended personal narratives of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Gideon, and others, but these personal narratives are definite sections of the general history as well as integral portions of larger books. The two personal narratives studied in the present section form separate books and detail the course of affairs that only incidentally, though vitally, affect the main stream of history. The one, Esther, tells of a woman who saved thousands, perhaps even the vast majority of her people, and of a man who, like Joseph and Daniel, became prime minister to a foreign emperor. There is no hint, however, that Mordecai and Esther

[a]The instructor may insist upon a more or less thorough reading of the references in this and the following paragraph according to the chief purpose and the available time of his course. A complete carrying out of the suggestion will, however, amply repay the student.

became any such link in the history as did Joseph, for example. The other of these personal narrative books is Ruth, the story of a woman who was the ancestress of David, and, as such, a link in the history; but the book that tells her story presents interesting phases of her private life, not what she did as a public leader.

These two narratives represent the priestly and prophetic tendencies respectively. Esther is not merely a story flowing out of the folk-literary life of the Hebrews; it is an account of how a new ritual feast grew out of an especial deliverance accomplished through the willingness of a beautiful woman to brave an Oriental monarch and to risk her life for her people. This, of course, betrays the priestly point of view. In studying Ruth the prophetic standpoint will be apparent. Both books are named not according to their authors, but for their respective heroines.

¶2. Esther.

Describe:

(1) The Oriental royal feast that opens the story.

Read Esther 1:1-8.

(2) The accompanying harem feast and a queen's refusal.

Read Esther 1:9-12.

Some scholars think the author means to attribute Vashti's refusal to womanish whim and willfulness and to represent Esther as better (verse 19) by being more subservient to the will of her husband and king. Others think it was Vashti's womanly dignity and modesty that asserted itself in the face

of a king's demand.* If the latter be the correct interpretation of the author's mind, then Esther is, like "Vanity Fair,"[a] a story without a hero, but with two heroines, the former representing one of two basic virtues through which woman makes her chief contribution to civilization, the courage of a fine refusal, as the latter, Esther, represents the other, the willingness to sacrifice herself for others.

(3) The council of Memucan, a reactionary on the question of the relation of wife to husband. Noting especially verse 17,

Read Esther 1:13-22.

(4) The search for a new queen.

Read Esther 2:1-18.

Here the narrative begins an ancient love story. Bible readers will remember the love stories of Genesis: how Isaac has no voice in the selection of his wife and how in the midst of ancient conditions a beautiful love-story is possible; and how, though Jacob by an accident becomes a hero of a more modern type, an Oriental custom interferes and gives him Leah instead of Rachel to wife.** The second chapter of Esther presents, similarly, a picture shocking to moderns, but natural to an Oriental court. Some have sought to blame Mordecai for sacrificing the virtue of his niece and ward for the

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*Compare especially Talmage's sermon on "The Queen Vashti Refused to Come."

[a] Mordecai is certainly not more the hero of the story than Dobbins in "Vanity Fair."

**Compare the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," § 7, ¶ 10 and § 9, ¶¶ 2-4.

sake of his own advancement, but this charge reads modern ideals into an ancient situation. He was no more exposing Esther than Naomi was exposing Ruth in the book next to be considered; both incidents were natural to the ancient world. Nor is there any intimation that Mordecai was violating his religious scruples. Rather does Esther's marriage to a heathen monarch without any hint of scruple indicate that Esther is not the narrow nationalistic book[a] some maintain it to be: that while it does glorify the Jews, it has some of the broader spirit shown in the marriage of Boaz with Ruth, the Moabitess.

(5) What bit of unrewarded service is mentioned?

Read Esther 2:19-23.

(6) Haman and Mordecai and the decree on the destruction of the Jews.

Read Esther 3.

Why did Mordecai not bow? Was it a personal whim or excessive pride? or was it connected with his religion, as in Daniel 1:8, 6:5? Does the fact that Haman wishes to take vengeance not merely on Mordecai or his immediate family but on the entire Jewish population indicate that Mordecai was expressing a Jewish scruple in his refusal to bow? Compare especially verse 8.

(7) The consternation of the Jews.

Read Esther 4:1-12.

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[a]Even Luther thought Esther, like James, unworthy of a place in the Canon of Scripture; they both "Judaized" too much for him. It should be noted that the Jews placed Esther second only to the Law.

It has been observed that Esther is the only book in the Old Testament in which the name of God does not appear. The importance of this fact can easily be overestimated, though it may have been one of the reasons why Esther's place in the Canon was so disputed. Perhaps many Christian preachers who preached to the same people Sunday after Sunday will sometimes preach whole sermons on special themes without the mention of the name of Christ, perhaps without naming the name of God. In any case Esther, as has been seen, seems to turn upon the Jewish religious scruple of refusing to bow. The feast of Purim may be a less religious feast than the others, and fasting is referred to here (verse 3) without specific mention of prayer; but Purim entered into the religious calendar of Judaism, and Esther asks the Jews to fast, and fasts herself, in such a way as to indicate her belief in an objective effectiveness of fasting equivalent to that of prayer. Observe this in reading the next passage.

(8) Esther to the rescue.

Read Esther 4:13-17.

How far is the assurance of deliverance in verse 14*a* and the sense of plan and purpose for the individual life in verse 14*b* equivalent to a doctrine of Divine Providence and a practical mention of the name of God? Compare Ruth 2:3, "her hap was," where the whole tenor of the book seems to indicate the author's view that God had something to do with the "hap." Is Esther or Ruth the more explicit on the doctrine of Providence? Consider carefully two points: (*a*) The doctrine of verse 14; and (*b*) the noble

self-sacrifice of Esther. Does not the question of verse 14*b* seem to weigh more heavily with her than the threat of verse 13? Note particularly the spirit of verse 16. Compare ¶2 (2), above. Is not Esther 4:13-16 one of the really great passages of Scripture?

(9) The sequel.

Read chapters 5 to 7.

(*a*) Compare Esther's method with the way Joseph postponed making himself known to his brethren. Why did Esther not speak out her request at once?

(*b*) How realistic a touch is chapter 6! Meditate on it. Why do Haman's "wise men" and his wife make the statement of verse 13? How does it differ in purport from the dream of Pilate's wife, and from the faith of Psalm 73:1 and Isaiah 29:5-8, for example?

(*c*) What was the fate of Haman? Compare the proverbial expression to "hang as high as Haman": this fate of Haman becomes almost as typical and classic a case of "poetic justice" as Daniel is of moral courage and conquering faith.

(10) The counter decree and the outcome,

Read Esther 8:1 to 9:19.

Esther 8:11 and 9:12, 13 are frequently cited as showing the cruel narrowness of the book. One should remember the age in which it was written (compare even the beautiful one hundred and thirty-seventh Psalm) and how oppressed and hated the Jews were at times. Just as there is an "insolence of health" that fails to appreciate the viewpoint of sick folk, so there is an insolence of peace that does

not comprehend the meaning of war and captivity with their cruelties and oppressions. Many a modern Belgian and Serbian can understand the general feeling of the Jews of Esther's day. Compare the book of Nahum (§28, ¶5 (*d*)). One should judge in the light of the entire situation.

Note the refrain concerning "The spoil." Recall the last clause of Esther 3:13.

(11) The new feast.

Read Esther 9:20-32.

Characteristically the beautiful story of Esther is told, not for the sake of its beauty as a story, but to serve a more practical end. Compare §31, ¶1: This paragraph should be reread at this point.

(12) The new premier.

Referring again to 8:15-17,

Read Esther 10.

Compare Joseph and Daniel. What was the keynote of Mordecai's life work (verse 3)?

¶3. Ruth.

(1) Cooke says:

> The ancient narratives of the book of Judges carry us back to a half-barbarous age of struggle and disorder, memorable chiefly for the deeds of Israel's heroes; the book of Ruth, although the scene is laid in the same age, gives us a very different picture. It introduces us to the peaceful life of the home and of the village, with its sorrows and joys, its wholesome industry and kindly virtues; a life which is by no means barren of heroic qualities, but they take the form of unselfish affection and generosity and loyalty to the ties of the kindred; a simple community, tenacious of long-established customs, and penetrated throughout by a spirit of unaffected piety.*

*Cooke, The Cambridge Bible, "Ruth," page xi.

The recent study of Judges should help the student to appreciate this contrast between Ruth and Judges as well as the similarity of the prophetic point of view in the two books.

There is also an instructive contrast between Ruth and Esther. One is the love story of an ancient royal court; the other, a love story of quiet village life. The one reflects the priestly, the other the prophetic, point of view. In the one a Jewish woman saves her people and brings destruction upon their foes; in the other a foreign Moabitess woman becomes a mother in Israel. One loves Ruth, so simple, unaffected, and affectionate is she, though Esther is perhaps the nobler woman, with her offering of herself for her people.

(2) A Jewish migration that came to a sad end. Read Ruth 1:1-5.

Possibly the author intended in this terse summary of sorrow to win his readers, much in the same way that Amos did (§1, ¶2 (1)) by stating facts that would appeal to their prejudices. A Hebrew who forsook his own land, they thought, showed a lack of faith in Jehovah; and early death and the extinction of his house were his just deserts. Compare verse 20. It will soon appear how far beyond these prejudices the later events lead.

(3) As the story of Esther turns upon the marriage customs of the court, so that of Ruth turns upon another ancient ideal, the levirate marriage.

Read Ruth 1:6-13 and compare §36, ¶6 (*c*) and the Biblical reference to this subject there given.

(4) An unbounded affection comparable to the friendship of David and Jonathan.

Read Ruth 1:14-22.

Consider the implication that a foreigner may be loved into a devotion to Israel's God. Observe the natural touch of verse 19.

(5) Taking up the new life. Noting the beautiful ancient background and the acquaintance that in any age might ripen into love and marriage,

Read Ruth 2.

(6) Naomi, like Mordecai, seeks to perform a guardian's part by her ward. Keeping in mind the ancient ideals and customs, and comparing Jacob (Gen. 29:1-30) and Esther,*

Read Ruth 3:1 to 4:10.

There is hardly any more charming narrative in literature than this of Ruth.

(7) The modern love story ends at the altar with "they lived happily ever after"; the ancient love-story ended at the cradle. Noting the wish of the people in the gate, and the beautiful scene at the birth of the child,

Read Ruth 4:11-17*a*.

The ideal of a life-companionship of man and woman "when they love their best" is a higher one than the ideal of race propagation as the only purpose of marriage. The most recent turn of modern social ideals, however, tends properly, not to destroy the individualism gained, but to restore alongside it the ideals of the ancient time.

*Compare the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," § 9, ¶¶ 2-4.

(8) The ancestress of David.

Read Ruth 4:17*b*-22.

Some think the book of Ruth was written as a protest against the wholesale divorcement of foreign wives following Ezra and Nehemiah, or at least that it was preserved for that purpose, to show how a Moabitess having been loved into the fellowship of Israel's religion became the ancestress of David. Compare the didactic purpose of the book of Jonah. Others feel that the story of Ruth is told too simply and beautifully to hide any such controversial aim. In any case the book reflects the prophetic spirit and piety and the prophetic outlook beyond the circles of a narrow nationalism.

¶4. Now, with all the points of this section in mind, comparing the two books, getting the beauty, purpose, and message of each,

Read at a sitting the books of Esther and Ruth.

CHAPTER XIII

TYPES OF LITERATURE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

§ 39. Types of Literature in the Old Testament.

¶ 1. There are several different methods of studying the Old Testament and several different orders in which the various books may be considered. The most obvious one takes the books in the order in which they come in the English versions. It must be remembered, however, that this order does not correspond to the order of the original Hebrew, which, as regards the larger groupings, observes the order in which the successive collections of books became canonized, or recognized as Scripture. As has been seen, the law, or the five Mosaic books, came first; then the prophets, including the Earlier Prophets, or the historical books from Joshua to 2 Kings, and the Later Prophets, considered as four books, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve. The third group, or canon, is more miscellaneous, and is called simply "The Writings" or "The Other Writings" of the Hagiographa, from the Greek words meaning "holy writings." But the order of the Jewish collection and canonization is not necessarily the best order for Christian study. Judaism was a religion of law, and the legal elements break into the historical movement recorded in Genesis to 2 Kings. The best arrangement when the Law was the entire Bible is not the best, therefore, when the canon of the prophets is added. Within the canon of the prophets, because of the size of the ancient

rolls or books, "The Twelve" became quite a miscellaneous group, earlier and later prophets being grouped together in spite of the fact that the great three, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, intervene. More miscellaneous still is the third canon, the Hagiographa, and in the various editions of the Hebrew Bible the order of books in this canon varies widely.* Chronicles, which in the standard Hebrew Bible is the last book of all, has its affinities either with the other histories (and is so placed in the English version) or with the priestly element. The English version improves on the Hebrew order further in placing Daniel among the prophets; but it can hardly be regarded as an improvement to put the Psalms between Job and Proverbs and to place the five "Megilloth," or liturgical rolls—the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther—where the English version places them. Besides, it does not go far enough in logical rearrangement, though for the Christian student it moves in the right direction.

The method usually adopted by recent scholars is the classification of the Old Testament literature into three main types or elements: the prophetic, the priestly, and the wisdom. This classification has been adopted with some modifications. The treatment of the usual modern classification in the two volumes of the present study is a concession to

*A most convenient brief statement of the order of books in the various Hebrew and Greek Codices and Editions is given by Paton in the International Critical Commentary, "Esther," pages 1-5.

the other of the two most logical lines of division of Old Testament literature, that according to the type or literary form of the book rather than according to the type of leadership represented by the authorship. The Old Testament literature under this scheme may, counting the cross classifications, be divided as follows:

(*a*) History: Genesis to Esther in large measure. History is also included in certain Psalms, prophecies, etc.

(*b*) Personal narratives and biography: this is largely a subdivision of the first class.

(*c*) Prophetic oracles and sermons: Isaiah to Malachi. A special aspect of this type of literature is the apocalyptic.

(*d*) Legal codes and priestly prescriptions: contained in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, and in a few passages elsewhere.

(*e*) Sayings, or proverbs, and parables: largely collected in the book of Proverbs, though many are scattered throughout the Old Testament.

(*f*) Philosophy, found not only in the wisdom literature, but even more prominently in the prophetic writings.

(*g*) Poetry.

¶2. Poetry in the Old Testament.

In the classifications of the preceding paragraph cross classifications have been allowed for, and it is to be expected, therefore, that the Old Testament poetry should contain not only prophetic, priestly, and wisdom points of view, but also historical and

philosophical emphases and proverbial and parabolic forms.

The broadest division of literature is poetry and prose. One recalls how Monsieur Jourdain, in Molière's "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme,"* awoke suddenly to the realization of the fact that he had been talking prose all his life; but one must not think that all prose or all poetry is the same in degree, or that hard and sharp lines are any more possible here than elsewhere in nature and life. A table of statistics may be placed at one end and songs without words at the other end of the scale of rhythm: in between will range all the various types of speech and writing. Passing from statistics into chronicles, thence into the best narratives, one finds rhythmic prose appearing. Farther along still is the prose essay of a Stevenson or Ruskin, or rhythmic oratory, especially that of the Greeks.[a] Thence the scale

*Act II., Scene VI., in Delbos' School Edition and others. Act II., Scene IV., in "Les Grand Ecrivains de la France" Edition and others.

[a]Note the tendency of speakers to singsong and of ritual toward the chant. There is a rhythmic swing in the whole of Hayne's speech in the Senate, for example, and in Webster's more high-sounding periods when he leaves his logical arguments. Lincoln's Gettysburg address has been arranged more or less successfully into verse lines. Of the Biblical material, Bernhard Duhm in the article on "Poetical Literature," in the Encyclopedia Biblica (§ 2 (iii.), column 3794 f.) says: "We are consequently often in doubt where prose passes into metrical poetry, and one commentator will find clearly marked verses and strophes where another will find plain prose, or at best poetical style. Almost the whole of the prophetic

passes into didactic and ballad poetry, if indeed these are more rhythmical than the best prose; thence into pure lyric and the mystic music that no words can utter or accompany.

The bulk of the Old Testament poetry is either lyric or didactic. Several elegies occur; the pure ballad is not frequent. The book of Job is by some considered dramatic; by others, epic: it is certainly difficult to classify. Some maintain that these are Greek terms and distinctions and cannot be applied to Hebrew poetry; but certainly the main types are similar and references to them will be made in the study of specific poems.

A cursory treatment of Hebrew poetry is found in the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History,"* necessary there in order to understand the random poems embedded in narrative: but now that the poetical books are to be considered, a more adequate view of Hebrew poetry is demanded.

The best starting point for such a consideration of the form of Hebrew poetry is in a review of some facts concerning English verse. English rhythm is based on the length and number of syllables to the line and on the matching of the lines with one another, frequently abetted through rhythm. Tennyson's poem,

> Break, break, break,
> On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!

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literature is involved at the present time in this ambiguity."

*Pages 45-47.

is obviously trimeter—that is, it has three meters or measures to the line. Longfellow's "Evangeline" is a hexameter (six measures):

Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of heaven.

An examination of English verse will show not only the several meters, but also how each meter, trimeter, tetrameter, etc., is further varied by the length and number of the syllables to the measure.

Likewise the use of rhyme varies. Sometimes rhyme occurs at the end of every line, as in Whittier's hymn,

It may not be our lot to wield
The sickle in the ripened field.

More usual is the rhyming of alternating lines, as in Gray's "Elegy":

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Not infrequently the first and third lines do not rhyme, the rhyming of the second and fourth being sufficient for the poetic effect. An interesting variation from the ordinary forms is that most familiar through Tennyson's "In Memoriam," where the first line rhymes with the fourth and the second with the third. It combines the longer character of the "Elegy" versification with the form found in Whittier's hymn:

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove.

A still more complicated combination of simple forms into a complex one is found in one of the national hymns,

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing:
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the settler's[a] pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring.

Here the first two lines rhyme and a third follows swinging in midair, which gives an attractive variation. Then three instead of two rhyming lines succeed, followed by another odd line that rhymes with line three and gives balance to the whole.

It is necessary to recall, further, that the highest and best English verse as well as the stately poetry of the Greeks and of other peoples does not employ rhyme at all, but secures the balance of lines in some other way. Rhyme is therefore only one of a number of devices of form that poetry may use.

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[a]Feeling that the word "pilgrims'" here makes the song too provincial and that Van Dyke's or other additions will never gain adequate acceptance, this amendment is suggested. Since this note was written an article by Dr. Sam Steel appeared in the *Texas Christian Advocate* of February 20, 1919, suggesting the word "patriot's" in the place of "pilgrims'," which is perhaps an even better substitution.

Compare Bryant's "Thanatopsis," or Milton's "Paradise Lost," which begins,

> Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
> With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
> Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
> Sing, heavenly Muse.

A current movement deals more freely with the devices and forms of poetry: this movement is called free verse, and flows out of the work of Walt Whitman.

Because of these variations in verse form and variations still more wide, when one considers and compares the poetry of other peoples, the question forces itself forward as to just what it is that under these varying forms constitutes the essence of poetry. "The best point of approach to the question is to go back of the effects to the cause. Poetry is the result of man's effort to get above the commonplace and to find fitting expression for his higher thoughts and finer feelings."* One recalls Matthew Arnold's insistence that poetry is "a criticism of life" and "the most perfect speech of man," and, following Wordsworth and Aristotle respectively, that it is "the breath and fine spirit of all knowledge," and that its superiority over history "consists in its possessing

*The author owes this statement to his colleague, Prof. John H. McGinnis, of the English Department of Southern Methodist University. The thesis is worked out in an, unhappily, unpublished lecture.

higher truth and higher seriousness."* Poetry then is "elevated thought and feeling," and the forms it takes in various races and climes and ages may not be indifferent, may even be natural and necessary, yet they are altogether secondary.

Now the principles of Hebrew poetry are the same as those of the Indo-European nations, but the methods of attaining rhythmic and suspense effects—that is, the verse forms—are vastly different. The meter seems to be determined, not by the length and number of syllables, but by line-accents or beats. Toy has suggested the terms bimary, termary, and the like, instead of dimeter, trimeter, etc., to describe Hebrew meters. Some deny even the existence of Hebrew meter, but certainly there could hardly be any sort of a rhythm without some reference to the length of the lines and even the parts of longer lines. Line accentuation is necessary as an aid even to the Greek and Latin as well as the English measures.

More significant in Hebrew poetry is the balancing effect produced by the synonymous parallelism similar to that derived from the modern rhyme. It is formed by repeating in a second line substantially the thought of the first:

> The heavens declare the glory of God,
> And the firmament showeth his handiwork.

Here the words "heavens" and "firmament" mean the same thing, and the ideas of declaring and showing are parallel, while "glory" is interestingly implied

*Matthew Arnold, "Essays on Criticism"; Second Series, pages 128, 5, 3, 21.

from the first line into the word "handiwork" of the second. Kautzsch in a little book, unfortunately not available in English, explains the similarity between ancient parallelism and the modern form as follows: "Indeed, its working rests upon exactly the same basis upon which the working of rhyme rests. It is the magic spell of the incessant, newly awakened expectation and the suspense called forth by it on the one hand, and on the other the equally incessant and, to either hearer or reader, decidedly satisfying allaying of that suspense. . . . We know and feel that it must come, and are yet in an agreeable suspense until it does come."*

Kautzsch further illustrates by adapting Goethe's couplet,

> Scarce has one sentence met the ear
> Another comes, to caress the first.**

George Adam Smith calls attention to the fact that parallelism is not confined to Hebrew poetry, but urges that it is not only prevalent in Babylonia and in some forms of Egyptian and Arabic poetry, but that "parallelism, in its many varied forms, appears in all poetries from their most primitive stage."*** More striking than the examples he cites from modern authors is the use of parallelism in

*"*Die Poesie und die poetischen Bücher des Alten Testament*," page 5.

**Book cited, page 7. Goethe has "word" referring to the rhyme; Kautzsch says, in effect, substitute "sentence" and you have the philosophy of parallelism, in the same terms as Goethe's philosophy of rhyme.

***"The Early Poetry of Israel," Schweich Lectures for 1910, pages 14-17.

Poe's "Raven," "The Bells," and "Anabel Lee," and in Sidney Lanier's "Sunrise" and "A Ballad of Trees and the Master."

Just as the ordinary forms of rhyme and meter develop into more complicated forms or pass over into blank verse, so does parallelism go beyond itself. Most natural is the so-called antithetic parallelism, which is rather the antithesis of parallelism, where the second member states a truth antithetical to the first:

> For the arms of the wicked shall be broken;
> But the Lord upholdeth the righteous. (Ps. 37:17.)

A still greater departure amounting to a passing from rhyme to blank verse is the so-called synthetic parallelism, where the second member fulfills the condition or thought of the first:

> As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
> So panteth my soul after thee, O Lord. (Ps. 42:1.)

Although the synthetic parallelism certainly and the antithetic probably are not properly parallelisms, it will be best to keep the traditional terms and to call parallelism proper by the fuller name of "synonymous parallelism."

Some of the various combinations of these several forms will be noted in connection with the treatment of the poems themselves, or may be found catalogued and treated in the works on Hebrew poetry.*

One must keep in mind, however, that the Semitic peoples developed these verse forms and employ

*Compare especially Briggs, The International Critical Commentary, "The Psalms," Vol. I., pages xxxiv.-xlviii.

them as mere instruments to communicate their "higher thoughts and finer feelings" to the open mind and heart. Do not lose the spirit of the marvelous poetry of the Old Testament in considering the forms. This injunction is less important in the study of the didactic and less elevated poetry of the Proverbs, but is absolutely necessary in considering the higher poetry of Job, the Song of Songs, and the Psalms.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WISDOM BOOKS: PROVERBS

§ 40. The First Section of the Book of Proverbs.

Proberbs 1 to 9.

¶1. What is the ideal of the wise man as given in the introductory poem?

Read Proberbs 1:1-6.

Verses 2, 4, and 5 are plainly synonymous parallelisms. In verse 4, "The simple" means "The immature," and is practically synonymous, therefore, with "The young man." Verses 3 and 6 are a slight departure from the synonymous parallelism, toward the synthetic. The meter—that is, the length and accentuation of the lines—keeps the poetic character intact. The parallelism in verse 3 indicates, though the couplet is almost synthetic in form, that "the wise dealing" referred to is not shrewdness, but the wisdom of doing right.

The poem appeals to two classes, the immature and the wise: as the one needs to begin, the other needs to continue assiduously the study of wisdom.

¶2. The motto or text of Hebrew wisdom.

Read Proverbs 1:7.

Note the margin-translation: "Chief part" is possibly a better rendering than "beginning."[a]

[a]The word is *réshith*, the same word, less the preposition, as the first word of the Old Testament, Genesis 1:1. Ben Sira in his first chapter seems to interpret the word here as "beginning," since he uses ἀρχή, and goes on to refer to the fear of the Lord as being also "the fullness," "the crown," "the root," and even the entirety of wisdom.

Compare the way the English word "first" sometimes means first in point of time, sometimes first in importance.

The orthodox Hebrew wise man identifies wisdom and the fear of the Lord: this is his philosophy of life, and ultimately his reconciliation of Greek and Hebrew thought.

Note that the parallelism is antithetic. Hereafter only certain more significant poetic forms will be specifically mentioned, but it will be well for the student now and then to pause and classify the various forms.

¶3. A short didactic poem of warning against temptations to violence and robbery.

Read Proverbs 1:8-19.

The first two verses constitute the introduction, the next verse gives the general warning against the enticement of sinners. Note that the remainder of the poem explains what specific sort of sin and enticement the poem has in mind.

Observe in verses 18 and 19 that the evil conduct is not condemned as being rebellion against God as a prophet might designate it, but as being "unwise." This is the point of view of the wisdom literature, and is not an attitude to be despised. It is sometimes said that the modern world needs a revival of a sense of the sinfulness of sin. This is true, but it does not need to exclude the idea that sin is also stupid. Jesus uses both conceptions. When the prodigal returns, he does not say, "I have played the fool," though that was the thought that made him first think of turning homeward; he says rather, "I

have sinned against God and thee, and I am no more worthy." But on another occasion Jesus describes a rich man who built larger barns to store his abundant crops. The man was certainly selfish and unsocial, yet God does not say to him, "Thou scoundrel, thou sinner, thou shouldst have thought of others or have given to the poor." God says rather, "Thou fool, thou hast a false view of security and certainty concerning life." Compare also the parable of the talents, where one servant was "good and faithful," another "wicked and slothful," with the closing parable of the Sermon on the Mount where one man is "wise" and another "foolish." Compare §9, ¶2 and §10, ¶4 (2).

The prophets as well as Jesus were influenced by the wisdom ideal. Harper* even thinks that the mark distinguishing Amos from the older ecstatic prophets is the influx of a common-sense wisdom viewpoint. Nevertheless, the prophetic emphasis is always on the rebelliousness and heinousness, not on the unwisdom, of sin. Though the old-time Methodist and Calvinistic preachers sounded the warning that hell is the punishment awaiting sinners, yet their emphasis was not "You are foolish to take such a risk," but "You deserve to go there because you have sinned against a holy God." It was the prophetic standpoint that they were reflecting.

The wisdom literature likewise shows the influence of the prophetic and priestly conceptions in maintaining the fear of the Lord and urging trust in him.

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*International Critical Commentary, "Amos," page civ.

Notwithstanding this, they look at sin rather from the standpoint of its unwisdom, its foolishness, and not less insistently do they point out the wisdom rather that the duty of doing right.

Keep this distinction in mind in your study of the wisdom books.

¶4. Wisdom's rejected appeal.

Read Proverbs 1:20-33.

Three words—the "simple," the "fool," and the "scoffer" or "scorner"—represent the wise man's antipathies. The first means usually merely the immature; the other two words sometimes seem quite synonymous; sometimes the scoffer seems to indicate a far worse character than the fool and is condemned with even a prophetic zest and tinge of feeling.

Verse 22 has three instead of two parallel lines: compare the last part of the verse of "My country, 'tis of thee" (page 191). Verse 21 contains probably only two parallel lines, if written properly. Note that in verse 29, according to the principle of parallelism, "Knowledge" and "The fear of Jehovah" seem to be regarded as quite identical. Compare Hosea's emphasis on knowledge, particularly Hosea 4:1 and 6.

¶5. Wisdom, the deliverer of its devotees.

Read Proverbs 2.

The gist of the poem is that wisdom leads to Jehovah, and Jehovah gives wisdom which delivers its possessor from the two great enemies of the would-be wise man: the evil man and the strange woman.

With verses 21 and 22 compare 14:34. These

passages express in its classic form the wisdom statement of the prophetic philosophy of history.

¶6. (1) Trust in Jehovah is set forth as the highest wisdom in a beautiful little poem less didactic in style and warmer in feeling than most wisdom poems. The hands are the hands of wisdom, but the voice is the voice of prophetism:

Read Proverbs 3:1-12.

On the interplay of influence between prophetism and wisdom see ¶3.

(2) Trust in Jehovah normally brings God's care and personal prosperity (Prov. 3:6 and 10); but there is another side. It does not always seem to do so; therefore

Reread Proverbs 3:11 and 12.

This is a constant tenet of Hebrew wisdom, a deeper philosophy of life than the older and bolder ideas.

¶7. The value and power of wisdom—another beautiful poem:

Read Proverbs 3:13-26.

Note especially verse 19.

¶8. Be kind to neighbors, and envy not the wicked.

Read Proverbs 3:27-35.

¶9. Of the next passage Martin says:

> Here is a tender personal passage, throwing a light on the early days of the teacher. It gives us a beautiful picture of the pious household. . . . The passage has almost certainly had great influence upon later generations, and formed a model for many homes in Puritan England and the Scotland of the Covenant. (Cf. Burns, "Cotter's Saturday Night.")*

*The New Century Bible, "Proverbs," etc., page 44.

Read Proverbs 4:1-9.

¶10. Two other poems similar, if less tender, in tone.

Read Proverbs 4:10-27.

¶11. The danger of the strange woman is one of the constant themes of the wise man. She has been referred to in a previous passage. Note here the vivid descriptions, the searching questions, and the terse sayings.

Read Proverbs 5:1-23, 6:20 to 7:27.

Just as the contrast between the spirit of prophetism and that of wisdom becomes quite obvious in their respective attitudes toward violence and robbery, so the contrast between the wisdom and priestly viewpoints is clearly illustrated in their respective attitudes toward sexual sin. What is the reason given in the present passage for avoidance of the sin of adultery? Compare Leviticus 18:20, 24, and 25 and 19:2. The priestly standards see in adultery defilement and uncleanness; the wisdom ideal regards it as the road to ruin, as foolish and stupid, a sacrifice of permanent good to momentary temptation. Keep these three attitudes toward wrongdoing in mind in your further study.

¶12. While the wisdom of doing right is the great theme of this literature, the wise man by no means ignores worldly prudence and particularly enjoins the virtues of industry and thrift. Noting specifically verse 6,

Read Proverbs 6:1-11.

¶13. The next passage is in a more strictly ethical strain.

Read Proverbs 6:12-19.

¶14. The glory and the work of wisdom. Comparing 3:19 and taking note of the personified wisdom as the companion of Jehovah before the earth was,

Read Proverbs 8:1 to 9:6.

The praise of wisdom is a never-ending theme of the Hebrew wise man. Compare the apocryphal books, "The Wisdom of Jesus ben-Sira, or Ecclesiasticus," and the so-called "Wisdom of Solomon."

Proverbs 8:36 gives the gist of the whole wisdom creed.

¶15. Noting how verse 9, according to the principle of parallelism, makes the phrases "wise man" and "righteous man" synonymous and how verse 16 seems to contrast the simple or immature and untaught man who yields to the temptress with the one who in verse 4 turns into wisdom's house,

Read Proverbs 9:7-18.

§ 41. The Remainder of Proverbs.

Proverbs 10 to 31.

¶1. The several divisions and division headings of Proverbs.

(1) Read Proverbs 10:1*a*.

This heading seems to mean either that some of the poems of the previous section were not Solomon's and that the caption in 1:1 applies only to a part of this section; or else merely that there is more than one collection of Solomonic proverbs in the book.

(2) Read 25:1, a special group of Solomonic prov-

erbs, and 30:1, 31:1, which introduce proverbs attributed to others than Solomon. Some scholars think that 24:23 introduces a short section (verses 23-34) likewise not attributed to Solomon but to anonymous wise men, while some see a similar section in 22:17 to 24:22. This latter, it is pointed out, begins not with "Incline thine ear, and hear the words of Solomon," but "Incline thine ear, and hear the words of the wise." In any case, it will be well to treat Proverbs 10:1 to 22:16 separately, as this is quite a long passage anyway, and such a procedure will afford an opportunity to compare it with the supposed short section, 22:17 to 24:22.

¶2. Read Proverbs 10.

Observe that instead of more or less extended poems on a single theme this chapter presents a group of sayings having little continuity, even where several proverbs on the same subject occur together. Note also that while the parallelisms in the previous section were predominantly synonymous these are usually antithetic.

There is quite a variety of topics treated in the chapter. Wise and foolish speech, the results of right-living and of wickedness, industry, and Jehovah's protection of the righteous, are handled more than once. Some of the sayings are very shrewd and striking (compare particularly verses 16 and 24): they flow out of a wise and thoughtful observation of life.

¶3. It is impossible in a course of this character to take up each verse of this section of the book of Proverbs. Though a number of sayings appear on

various other topics, they group themselves largely around a dozen themes. These are: the results of righteousness or moral wisdom in prosperity and in obtaining the Divine approval; the sins of the tongue —lack of control of speech and lying and false witness; the value of reproof and correction; industry and thrift; the relation of son and parent; charitable and just doings; anger and contention; pride; suretyship; riches, their value and their limitations; kings; woman. It is a very instructive proceeding to mark in some distinctive way the sayings on each of these topics. If one has a half-dozen colored pencils and underscores topic number one, say with a straight red line, number two with a wave line in red, number three with a straight blue line, number four with a wave line in blue, and so on for all the colors,[1] a mere glance will indicate the predominant emphasis and a little study will determine the exact treatment of each theme. Of course, there will be some cases of doubt and some

[1]Another method is to mark perpendicular straight lines on the left for topic number one, in the middle for number two, on the right for number three; then to use the wave line similarly; then the slanting lines from left top to right bottom and *vice versa*, etc. In this way one can get a sufficient number of different markings with the use of only pencil and ink. This method is frequently valuable for cross classifications after the other system has been used. One might also mark, say with an "x" in the margin, the passages that seem most striking or that treat other topics of importance. A wise student will learn to adapt and modify any system to fit the demands of his own mind.

differences of opinion about particular verses, and some will seem to fit more than one of the topics. These considerations, however, rather enhance than destroy the value of the exercise. A reading of the unmarked passages will show further the variety of the topics discussed.

Now, following this plan, at least with some of the topics,

Read Proverbs 10:1 to 22:16.

Not less instructive than the topics treated in the book of Proverbs are those omitted or lightly touched. There seems to be no specific statement in the section on the virtue of courage, and exhortations on self-control seem confined to questions of anger and the tongue. Only two sayings on friendship appear. Contrast the prominence of these virtues in Greek thought. Pertinent also is the fact that only a few references are made to the ritual and to sacrifice. Compare 15:8, 16:6, 20:25, and 21:3 and 27. The danger of sexual immorality, too, holds no such place in this section as in the preceding one; but note 22:14.

Self-sacrifice does not seem to have a place—must not one go beyond the wisdom point of view to find a ground for sacrificing one's self? The virtue of cheerfulness appears in several sayings, as do the glory of old age, the danger of wine, and the fact of God's all-seeing eye.

What other observations have you to make on the section? Compare the ethics of the Proverbs with that of the prophets as you remember it and with that of the Holiness Code (§34, ¶ 5).

Observe the individualistic, universalistic, and non-nationalistic temper of the Hebrew sage.

¶4. Proverbs 22:17 to 31:31.

(1) Proverbs 22:17 to 24:22.

(*a*) Noting the expression, "The words of the wise" (compare ¶1), the change to the first person, and what seems to some scholars a sectional introduction similar to 1:2-6,

Read Proverbs 22:17-21.

(*b*) The section is quite similar in tone to the preceding one. To be noted are: the frequency of a connected saying running through two verses, and the emphasis on the limitations of riches and on the evils of drink (23:20, 21 and 29:35).

Read Proverbs 22:22 to 24:22.

Consider the combination of sad experience with triumphant faith in 24:16. A great motto of Benjamin Franklin's was 22:29.

(2) Several "sayings of the wise" and the parable of the sluggard's vineyard.

Read Proverbs 24:23-34.

(3) Proverbs 25 to 29.

In this passage, observe: the collection of sayings on kings opening the section; and that on fools in 26:1-12 (the causeless curse being presumably one of his products); that on the sluggard in 26:13-16; the somewhat more connected discourse on "the whisperer" in 26:22-26; the rather greater emphasis upon humility in this section, particularly in 25:6 and 7, which may have suggested to Jesus his parable of similar import. With these points in mind,

Read Proverbs 25 to 29.

Compare 25:21 and 22 with the last part of Romans 12, and 27:1 with Matthew 6:34, Luke 12:20, James 4:13 and 14. In 26.17-21 the verses are without logical connection, but a word or idea in one proverb seems by a purely rote-memory association of ideas to suggest the succeeding proverb.

Among the more familiar and significant sayings are 28:1 and 29:1. An unusual note in the book is 28:13.

(4) The oracle of Agur.

The first portion of this chapter is difficult of interpretation and the student must be referred to the commentaries. The most of the remainder is taken up with a series of sayings in numerical groupings.[a] The most familiar and popular passages are the prayer of verse 8 and the "four little things" of verses 24-28. The moral outlook of the chapter is not unlike that of other sections of the book, though the interest shown in the topics chosen is quite different.

Read Proverbs 30.

(5) The oracle of the mother of King Lemuel.

The opening passage is largely on kings and their temptation to wine and women, and closes with an exhortation to righteous and humane rule. The remainder of the chapter portrays the ideal woman in the estimation of the ancient wise man.

Read Proverbs 31.

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[a]Compare Martin, New Century Bible, "Proverbs," etc., on Proverbs 30:7, page 192; compare also the Pythagorean deification of Numbers.

§ 42. The Character of the Wisdom Literature.

In the author's "Story of the Old Testament",* the following is said in illustration of the wisdom type of thought:

Of the three great educational forces of the old country life in America, the pulpit, the stump, and the cross-roads store, the last has been all but ignored. Here, nevertheless, gathered from day to day the farmers of the neighborhood, and it became a clearing house for the ideas of the community. If the preacher preached from the pulpit on Sunday, the farmer had his say through the week from the cracker box on the porch of the cross-roads store, where he gave his views on theology and ethics. If a candidate for Congress spoke in the county seat one day, for the next six months the cracker box philosopher discussed his speech and the political questions of the hour. Here, too, the successful man of the world told how he planted and harvested or of how he doctored his horse or cow; and if there was some wise man who, like Robert Louis Stevenson's "Will o' the Mill," had lived long and thoughtfully, the crossroads store was the pulpit whence spread his epigrams.

Now, there arose in Israel just such a quaint group of conversation-philosophers or "wise men," who delighted in epigram and who, with their pungent maxims of everyday life, began to rival the prophet and the priest. These proverbs got themselves repeated on all sides. The glory of wisdom and of knowledge—of more value than gold or rubies—the foolishness of a haughty spirit, the dangers of strong drink and impurity, and the virtue of prudence became common tenets everywhere. The general character of these philosophers can perhaps be best illustrated by calling Benjamin Franklin[a] the

*Pages 133 and 134.

[a]Shakespeare's fools are also purveyors of wisdom, called fools because they were foolishly bold in their wise observations.

"wise man" of American literature, and by pointing to Solomon as the archetype of the wise men of Israel. So true is the latter that the book of their short sayings is headed "The Solomonic Proverbs," just as the Psalms are called the Davidic Psalms, though many of them are not attributed to David by the Psalter itself.

The earlier type out of which wisdom arose is represented in the riddle couplets of Samson. To quote "The Story of the Old Testament" further:

Here, too, we find what seems to be genuinely premeditated rhyme. Samson puts forth his riddle, which, as it stands in the Hebrew Bible, cannot be rhyme.

> Out of the eater came forth meat;
> Out of the strong came forth sweetness.

But after the Philistines guess his riddle, suspecting that his bride had betrayed his secrets, he answers:

> If with my heifer you did not plow,
> You should not guess my riddle now.

Kautzsch notes rhyme in other places also, as in the songs of Lamech, and in Judges 16:24, where the Philistine turned the folk rhyme of Samson:

> Our God has delivered into our hand
> Him who spreads murder and havoc through our land.*

This, however, is only a very subordinate type of the wisdom literature, just as it is by no means representative of Old Testament poetry. In later times, the wise man or sage comes to be an important factor in the life of the nation. And when, after Malachi, the voice of prophecy is hushed or merged into the purely apocalyptic, the wise man and the wisdom literature hold a prominent place in Jewish life. Jesus himself adopts this method of teaching. Not only like the prophet does he preach,

*See Kent's "Historical Bible" and Kautzsch's "*Die Poesie und die poetischen Bücher des Alten Testament.*"

or like the rabbi teach in the synagogues, but also, like the wise man, he grips men by the way, uttering epigrams which circulate throughout the country. "Physician, heal thyself," "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country," and the Beatitudes are examples of this method in the teaching of Jesus.

But here we are concerned with the Old Testament alone. Already in Jeremiah (18:18) the wise man is mentioned as coördinate with the prophet and priest. "Come," say the people, "let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet."

From the saying or couplet figure it was only a short step to the fable or parable. One should not, however, as is usually done, regard the parable as a purely wisdom product. If one will compare the parable of Nathan (2 Sam. 12:1-7) with Jotham's fable (Judges 9:8-15) or with the more closely akin enacted-parable of Joab (2 Sam. 14:1-20), in which the "wise woman" of Tekoa suggests to David "Thou art the man," one will observe the difference between the parable in the mouths of the prophet and the wise man respectively. Nathan's parable makes David see the heinousness of his act, and was intended so to do, while Jotham's fable and Joab's parable strike at the foolishness of the courses condemned. The one has a didactic and prosaic, the other a characteristically human and poetic, flavor. Compare also 2 Kings 14:9 with Isaiah 5:1-7.

Two other types of wisdom are referred to in the Old Testament that must be clearly distinguished from the wisdom of the wisdom books. One is the wise judge who sees through cases brought to his

attention and decides them in a strikingly wise way. The typical instances of this sort of wisdom are Solomon's decision between the two harlots (1 Kings 3:16-28) and Daniel's separate examination of the witnesses in the apocryphal book, "The History of Susanna." Compare Deuteronomy 1:13-15. The second type is the magician or astrologer referred to in the book of Daniel (2:12).

Quite different from these are the wise men of Jeremiah 18:18 and of the book of Proverbs. Rising from the background of the common life of men and the folklore and folk-literary sayings, they become a set of professional teachers at first chiefly on topics of practical ethics; then, bathed in the spirit of prophecy, they urge trust in Jehovah and handle the deeper problems of evil and of life. It is customary to speak of the wisdom literature as the reflective thought or as the broader universalism and higher individualism of the Hebrews. Neither of these views is accurate or adequate. The broadest universalism, certainly, and in one aspect at least, a hardly less definite individualism appears in the prophets; and it is there, and not in the wisdom element, that the true Hebrew philosophy is found. This philosophy is a philosophy of history.

Read again §10, ¶11, §30, ¶1. Compare "The Story of the Old Testament," Chapter IX.

The classic wisdom statement of this philosophy is in Proverbs 14:34,

> Righteousness exalteth a nation,
> But sin is a curse to any people;

and in Psalm 37:11;

The meek shall inherit the land;
And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

The true touchstone of the wisdom literature is its view of righteousness and sin, as has been previously indicated. To the prophet, sin is rebellion and ingratitude;[a] to the priest, it is defilement and uncleanness; to the wise man, it is foolishness and stupidity. Righteousness is thought of, likewise, by the three viewpoints in terms of duty or obligation, of purity, and of wisdom respectively. One must not think of these three, however, as so many water-tight compartments of national thought and life, but as living, growing streams, each from time to time modifying the others in the direction of its own character. That they were distinct, nevertheless, in ancient life is shown by Jeremiah 18:18 as well as by other less explicit references; that they produced each a distinct product, however influenced by the others, a careful examination of the Old Testament will prove.

The wisdom type is not one exclusive, or even most native, to the Hebrew mind. Certainly, on the other hand, it must not be counted as the literature wherein the Hebrews attempted what the Greeks did in their philosophy. The early Greek thinkers, Thales and his successors, were not of this type: they were metaphysicians. In Socrates and the sophists the wisdom point of view comes to the

[a] Compare the Stoic devotion to God and the Stoic idea of moral obligation: in these aspects the Stoic philosophy is more akin to the point of view of the Old Testament prophets than to that of the wise men.

fore. They ask concerning wise courses of conduct and even declare that virtue is essentially wisdom and knowledge. Plato departs from this tenet, and in his "Republic"* so states his problem as to amount to a denial of the wisdom standpoint. His problem is: if it were definitely proved that it is unwise for the individual to be just, is there still any reason for the righteous life?[a] He answers, "Yes," and finds that reason in terms of æsthetics. These are the four great viewpoints for testing virtue and vice, obligation or rebellion, purity or defilement, wisdom or stupidity, beauty or ugliness. Perhaps sin as pathological, as disease, might be added to these; righteousness is then the normal, the healthy.[b] The Christian ideal of virtue as love is descriptive rather than critical. Love is how virtue behaves and is virtuous because it is obligatory, or wise in the long run, or ideal from the standpoints of flawlessness, normality, or beauty. After Plato and Aristotle, who took philosophy back to metaphysics, the wisdom ideal comes back to the fore; and in Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and the Epicureans the virtuous man is the wise man and "wisdom," in the technical sense, is the dominating note in philosophy.

The wisdom viewpoint is one that runs through the literature of the world. It is not the present

*The speeches of Glaucon and Adeimantus, in the opening of Book II.

[a]Of course the Republican State itself argues the value of social justice to the individual; but Plato goes beyond this in his reasons for the individual's conduct.

[b]Plato reflects this doctrine also.

purpose to deal further with the subject: so much has been said to show the real affinities of Old Testament wisdom.

A good exercise is to read the book of Proverbs and the discourses of Epictetus one after another to see their affinity as wisdom books. Compare also for two very different aspects of the same type—one philosophical, one practical—John Stuart Mill's little essay on "Utilitarianism" and Benjamin Franklin's "Poor Richard's Almanac." One of the important influences in Franklin's early life, by the way, was the book of Proverbs.

CHAPTER XV

THE WISDOM BOOKS: ECCLESIASTES AND JOB

§ 43. Ecclesiastes.

¶ 1. The general character of Ecclesiastes and Job. It should always be remembered that everything in the Bible is not of the Bible—that the Bible quotes all sorts of opinions. This fact should be constantly borne in mind while studying Job and Ecclesiastes. "All that a man hath will he give for his life," for example, is in the Bible; but if one will read Job 2:4 it will be seen to be a Satan's doctrine. So the speeches of Eliphaz and the other friends must not be taken without at least considering Job 42:7, and the speeches of Job must be balanced somehow with Job 38:1 and 2. Similarly, Ecclesiastes 12:13 indicates that various viewpoints have been considered in the book and that now "all have been heard" and the conclusion is in order. It has frequently been maintained that Proverbs represents the views of Solomon in the prime of a manhood faithful to Jehovah, and that Ecclesiastes represents the meditations of the aged king who had drunk deep at the fountains of both wisdom and dissolute pleasure. Whether this be the case or not, one must ask himself carefully how far the book itself in its final form means to give its approval to any particular view expressed.

Ecclesiastes and Job, then, are books that present various points of view in order to set forth a definite message.

¶2. The introductory statement concerning the ceaseless, dreary, treadmill round of life.

Read Ecclesiastes 1:1-11.

Dwell upon the attitude toward life represented here, and the ability with which this attitude is expressed as measured by the mood the reading of the passage induces. Compare the "Rubaiyat" of Omar Khayyam. For a discussion of this point of view see William James's essay, "Is Life Worth Living?" in his "Will to Believe." Compare also Bryant's "Thanatopsis" and "Flood of Years."

¶3. The preacher's or, as the word might better be translated, the lecturer's quest.

Read Ecclesiastes 1:12-18.

Which of the three viewpoints—prophetic, priestly, or wisdom—does the book reflect?

¶4. Mirth, wisdom, and achievement as motives in life and as values for life are successively tested out. What is the conclusion?

Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-23.

¶5. The pursuit of the even tenor of one's way and the theory of a time for everything seem to fare no better when put to the test. Noting especially the last clauses of 2:26 and 3:19,

Read Ecclesiastes 2:24 to 3:22.

Observe that while the Preacher may be called skeptical concerning a future life (3:20, 21) and concerning the value of life, he has a sure belief in God.

Does 3:22 present a conclusion concerning which the verdict "All is vanity" does not apply or does

this verdict apply here also? Compare 2:24. Keep this question in mind as you proceed.

¶6. Ecclesiastes 4:1 to 11:8.

There are many difficulties in the section, as indeed in the entire book: it has well been described as the fascination of the casual reader and the despair of the interpreter. Perhaps the section for the present study can be best considered as a symposium of observations and proverbs in line with the Lecturer's purpose expressed in 12:9—a symposium of proverbs bathed in the spirit of the introduction and the search (1:12 to 3:22) for some value in life. Observe that, as is frequent in men of a pessimistic tone, such as Buddha, Schopenhauer, and others, the note of profound sadness is accompanied by a note of deep and wide sympathy. These two strains have contributed largely to the popularity of the book, for all mankind knows the language of sorrow and sympathy.

Now read the section Ecclesiastes 4:1 to 11:9.

Note the injunctions and the faith of 5:7, 8 and 8:12, 13. Consider the doctrine of 7:29. What do you think of that of 7:1*b* and 16, 17? The proverbs in 9:10*a* and 11:1 have been favorites with many, as has the first part of 9:11. But consider this last in the light of the last clause of the verse: what do you think of it in this light? Consider the pathetic message of 9:13-16.

Underscore other passages that impress you.

¶7. Youth.

Read Ecclesiastes 11:9 to 12:8.

Is this an expansion of the tentative conclusion

of 3:22 or not? Consider the beauty and pathos of the passage. For proposed applications of details in 12:3-7 to different portions of the human body, one must be referred to the commentaries.

Note the conclusion, 12:8.

¶8. The end of wisdom and study.

Read Ecclesiastes 12:9-12.

Note the wisdom viewpoint.

¶9. The ultimate conclusion.

Read Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14.

The whole process represented in the book has been an effort to search out the wisest course of human conduct and the values in life that are worth seeking. According to the experience and inquiry of the Lecturer, vanity is written over the human endeavor to attain satisfaction. But one point remains steadfast, the fear of God. This is in keeping with the whole wisdom conception (compare Prov. 1:7 and the footnote on page 197); but the exact viewpoint of the two verses as a whole is more doubtful. Observe that the word "duty" is in italics, indicating that it is supplied by the translators to give their interpretation of the passage. If this clause means "This is the whole duty of man" and verse 14 threatens a deserved punishment upon those who rebel against God, this wisdom book finally abandons the idea of values for that of obligation and the wisdom for the prophetic standpoint. If the clause means "For this is the one value in life," or if verse 14 means the fear of God is wise in view of his inevitable judgment, then the wisdom standpoint is maintained. Either view is possible: which one do you take?

¶10. Now, in the light of your study,

Read Ecclesiastes at a sitting.

What do you think of the various passages and of the book as a whole? How far do you think the book gives its indorsement to any passage except the last two verses? Answer this question thoughtfully and carefully, expressing your own independent view.

§ 44. Job.

¶1. First recall the discussion of §43, ¶1.

The book of Job contains a prose prologue, a prose epilogue, and a poem constituting the body of the book. The Revised Versions make this evident by printing the poetry in verse form. Noting the straight prose character and absence of parallelism of the passages,

Read Job 1 and 2 and 42:7-17.

Such a reading obtains a complete story, except that the opening verses of the last passage indicate that certain utterances have been omitted. The Job of popular knowledge is the patient, faithful Job of the prose narrative. Except for a few short quotations which reflect the point of view of the Job of the prologue and epilogue, or which are known as isolated proverbs apart from any context, the poem of Job scarcely comes into the thought of the average person at all. The disasters that befell Job; the accusation of Satan; the unsatisfactory efforts of the three friends to "comfort" him, inferable from 2:11-13 and 42:7; the pitiable plight of the sufferer; the patient, pious words of 1:21 and 2:10; the subse-

quent prosperity following the prayer for his friends—this is the well-known Job, the model of patience. Just as in the case of the book of Hosea, there are so many cross currents of opinion concerning the Job-poem that it will be well to get one view as a whole before the mind and to leave detailed comparisons of other viewpoints for later study. One should not judge the view here presented, nor any view in so complicated a problem, until the whole presentation has been completed.

¶2. Job's cry of anguish and weariness with life.

Read Job 3.

Job's calamities (some feel that the seven-day silence of his friends was the culmination) have made him at least less patient. Compare Job's cursing of the day of his birth to Jeremiah's (Jer. 20:14-18). Consider the pathos of the longing for death and the silent peace of the grave (verses 13-15 and 17-19). Compare these verses with lines 31-50 of Bryant's "Thanatopsis" and with the book of Ecclesiastes.

¶3. The first speech of Eliphaz.

(1) Eliphaz says: "Now, Job, remember." He praises Job's previous conduct and urges him to hold on to God. "All will ultimately be well: the righteous suffer, but God saves them from destruction; they have troubles, but God delivers them"—this is his doctrine.

Read Job 5:18-20.

The same thought appears more finely expressed in the earlier part of the speech. An old school rhetoric compares the literal with the figurative style by citing the common proverb, "Misfortunes

never come singly," in comparison with Shakespeare's expression of the same thought,

> When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
> But in battalions!*

Now compare the common proverb quoted by Paul, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," with the same thought expressed in a highly poetic and beautiful way:

Read Job 4:7-9.

(2) Eliphaz has an explanation of Job's suffering as well as a call to trust.

(*a*) He feels that this explanation came to him in a deep, sacred, prophetic vision.

Read Job 4:12-14.

(*b*) It is not that Job has committed sin above others that he suffers, but it is that all men are sinful in the sight of God; and however perfect a man may be in the sight of men, he has no right to boast or complain before God. It is the doctrine of Daniel's prayer (Dan. 9), of Jesus in Luke 17:10, the doctrine that Paul worked out in its philosophical form in Romans. Compare especially Romans 3:9, 20, 23, 27; 4:2; and 11:32. The misunderstanding in the English Version of Job 4:17 has spoiled Eliphaz's point. Following the Revised Version margin and rendering verse 17,

> **Shall a man be just before God?**
> **Shall a man be pure before his Maker?**

Read Job 4:17-21.

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*"Hamlet," Act IV., Scene 5.

(*c*) Eliphaz insists that, since God charges his angels with folly, there is no use of turning to any of them: one can turn to God alone.

Read Job 5:1 and 8:16.

(3) Now, with these interpretations in mind,

Read Job 4 and 5.

Compare 5:10 with Matthew 5:45, and 5:13 with 1 Corinthians 3:19.

¶4. (1) Job's next speech is in part a pitiable plea for sympathy and a confession of the rashness of his previous utterance.

Read Job 6:3; compare verses 26 and 14 in this order.

(2) Job turns to a bemoaning of the hopelessness of his fate, and then seems to take the bit in his teeth and speak his whole mind's attack upon God.

Read Job 7:6, 7 and 7:11-14.

He had not gone so far in his previous speech.

(3) Job's contention is twofold: first, he claims his righteousness in view of the idea that suffering involves previous sin; second, he says that if he had sinned, why should God not forgive rather than afflict him so?

Read Job 6:29 and 7:20, 21.

(4) A bit of literature may be excellent either as an expression of idealistic thought of things that ought to be or, to use Mr. Wells's trenchant phrase, as "a footnote to reality." Now, considering this passage as such a "footnote," giving as perfectly as a Shakespeare could the inner workings of a mind in such a plight as Job's,

Read Job 6 and 7.

Compare the doctrines expressed by Job in these chapters with the view of Eliphaz.

¶5. Eliphaz has appealed to his own observation (4:8*a*) and to his prophetic vision; Bildad appeals to the authority of the ancients.

Read Job 8.

Verses 4 and 5 seem to argue, "Thy children were cut off, Job, for their own sin; your righteousness could not save them: only trust in God for your own deliverance." "All will ultimately be well with you" (verses 6, 7, and 21). Compare Ezekiel 14:12-20, 18:1 and Jeremiah 31:29, 30.

¶6. (1) The problem of Job and Eliphaz is the problem of Paul.

Read Job 9:2*b*. Compare Job 4:17 (R. V., margin) and Romans 2:13, 3:20.

Read also Job 9:28-31.

(2) Job, it seems, answers Eliphaz rather than Bildad. The latter's appeal to authority has had the effect in Job's mind simply of reënforcing the contention of the former. Job acknowledges that God's ways are past finding out and that man cannot be righteous in his sight.

Read Job 9:1-14.

(3) Verse 15 is difficult to square with verses 16 and 17. Perhaps Job means "should" rather than "would":[a]

> Whom, though I were righteous, I should not answer;
> I should [or ought to] make supplication to my judge,

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[a] Compare Gesenius-Kautzsch, "Hebraische Grammatik," 28 auflage, §107n.

> But if I had called, and he answered me,
> Yet would I not believe, . . .
> For he breaketh me.

(4) Job's plea, then, is one of confession and avoidance. "You are right," he says to his two friends who have thus far spoken, "God is great, and man is impure in his sight; but is this not tantamount to saying that there is no humanly intelligible moral order?"

Read Job 9:22-24.

(5) Job complains that there is no umpire to decide between himself and God. This is what he seeks: he wants to be shown some things.

Read Job 9:33 and 10:2.

(6) Now, with these points in mind,

Read chapters 9 and 10.

Is this the patient Job of the first days of his affliction or not?

¶7. (1) The chief difficulty of Zophar's speech is the last part of verse 6. But consider: (*a*) that the only charge made against Job so far has been, not one of specific sin previous to his affliction, but one of participation in the common sinfulness of humanity, which precludes the right of any man to object to any punishment or chastisement God might inflict; (*b*) that Zophar's next sentence is not a specification of Job's sins, but a question concerning the inscrutableness of God's ways. Is it not more probable, therefore, that Zophar's standpoint is the same as that of Eliphaz? Compare Isaiah 6:5.

(2) Now read Job 11.

How would you describe Zophar's character in

comparison with the characters of Eliphaz and Bildad?

¶8. (1) Job accuses God even more sharply still and asserts even more emphatically that the world is morally topsy-turvy.

Compare Job 12:4-6 with Malachi 2:17 and 3:13-15; Zephaniah 1:12; Habakkuk 1:3.

(2) Note that the margin of the English Revised Version and the text of the American changes the rendering of Job 13:15. The Authorized rendering reflects the attitude of the patient Job of the earlier days of his affliction and shows how fully the Job of general acceptation is the Job, not of the poem, but of the prose prologue. Furthermore, "But you are forgers of lies," in 13:4, is too adversative. Job is not saying, "God is on my side, not yours"; but "If God would not overawe me, I should like to argue the question out with him, especially if there were an umpire between us."

Read again Job 9:33-35 and then 13:3 and 20-28.

(3) Now read Job 12 to 14.

¶9. Noting especially verse 6 and how Eliphaz keeps to his main contention in verses 14-16 (compare 4:17-19),

Read Job 15.

Observe the note of faith in verse 22. Eliphaz further condemns Job's present attitude and blasphemy as he conceives it; but does he charge Job with specific sin previous to his affliction? Is not the wickedness he charges Job with one of refusing to believe that God is now caring for him and will relieve him if he is righteous and trusts God (verses

20-22)? And even granting that Job's suffering is boundless, Eliphaz asks the great question of verse 11: what is this?

¶10. Let Bildad's second speech be studied here in order that Job's next two speeches may be taken together.

Read Job 18.

¶11. (1) Note that in his two speeches (chapters 16, 17, and 19) Job arraigns God most severely.

Read Job 16:11-17 and 19:6.

(2) In this attitude Job does not get the better of his friends, but in his plea for sympathy he does—certainly from the standpoint of a modern interpreter.

Read 16:1-5 and 19:21.

(3) The usual interpretations of Job 19:25 have swung far from the traditional view that it is a direct prophecy of Christ, but the true interpretation seems to the present writer, taking the verse in its larger context, more nearly in the line of the older than of the critical view. Job's desire in 9:33, since he certainly could not have been thinking of a human umpire, was for a heavenly umpire to decide the case between himself and God. Now,

Read Job 16:19-22 and 19:25-27, following the Revised Version marginal rendering "vindicator," Hebrew *goel*, instead of redeemer. Compare the fear of Eliphaz in 4:18 and 5:1 that Job might turn to some angelic holy ones for vindication or sympathy.

Might not one ask at this point whether or not the longing for an intermediary between poor, weak man and the ever-increasingly-felt majesty and holi-

ness of God has not been the chief psychological factor in making Christianity with its mediatorial Christ take so strong a hold upon the universal human mind? And was not Job in his own way crying out for such a mediary? Compare the way Isaiah 53 sets forth a vicarious sacrifice as God's intermediary for working out his purpose in humanity. One might almost say that Job 19:25 and Isaiah 53 form the skeleton of Christian theology, at least in one of its main aspects, only needing to be filled in with the flesh and blood of the historic Jesus and breathed upon with the breath of life by the Holy Spirit as conceived in the writings of Paul.

(4) Now read Job 16, 17, and 19.

¶12. Zophar speaks in refutation of the doctrine of Job that the tents of robbers prosper and the wicked control the earth, by asserting the temporariness of their triumph. This Job rebuts, by reasserting the prosperity of the wicked and of his descendants and by affirming that punishment to his children after a man is dead is no real punishment to the man himself (21:21). Noting especially the strong language of 21:15,

Read chapters 20 and 21.

¶13. It is well to pause at this point and consider some later developments in the book. Two difficulties have long presented themselves to readers of Job: perhaps they are simply two phases of a single question, Why does God reply to Job in chapters 38 to 42 (compare 38:1, 2, 40:1, 2) so that Job repents and abhors himself (40:3-5 and 42:1-6),

although 42:7 condemns not Job but Eliphaz and his two friends? The only answer seems to be that, in general, the Jehovah speeches condemn the Job of chapters 3-21, while the Eliphaz of a later chapter, as will appear, is the one condemned in 42:7.

To the present writer the point of view that Eliphaz has so far been upholding is the one the Jehovah speeches approve and is the doctrine of the ninth chapter of Daniel and of Paul in Romans and Galatians. Man cannot claim exoneration and justification in the sight of God as a right due to his good works and pure character, but only by God's free grace. God's ways are past finding out (compare Rom. 3:4 and 11:33-36 and the book of Job, *passim*) and man is foolish to question his judgments: God is so high and holy that men cannot be spotless before him (compare particularly Eliphaz in 4:17 and Jehovah in 40:8, 9, and 14): hence man is wicked to question him. But

¶14. Eliphaz does not maintain his high ground. He begins to charge Job with specific sins, basing his opinion simply on the fact that Job is now suffering. He thus reverses his opinion expressed in 4:2-4. Comparing this earlier passage with 22:6-9,

Read Job 22.

This chapter might be called "The Fall of Elipnaz."[a]

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[a] As always, the method in these studies is to get the message of the final author. The question as to whether this turning point in the book of Job represents a different strain in the sources used by this final author is beyond the scope of the present purpose.

¶15. The next chapter might almost equally well be called "The Conversion of Job."

Observing the plaintive tone of the search for God in 23:3 and the faith of 24:20-24,

Read Job 23 and 24.

This is in a vastly different tone from that of the previous speeches and more akin to the Job of the earlier days of his affliction. Taking the Job-poem as a whole, Job's complaint reaches its climax in chapters 16-21. Does the fall of Eliphaz into specific and unfounded charges interject the stimulus that makes him begin to come to himself?

¶16. Bildad's next utterance merely reflects the earlier doctrine of Eliphaz.

Read Job 25.

¶17. Job, after a short lapse into his earlier mood, praises wisdom, which to him is identical with the fear of Jehovah (28:28); recalls his past happiness and his joy in previous pious service; bemoans his present state and asserts his integrity.

Read Job 26 to 31.

Is not this Job that is commended and the Eliphaz of chapter 22 that is condemned in 42:7?

¶18. There has been much debate over the speeches of Elihu. Perhaps his chief significance and originality is that, while the others emphasize the common sinfulness of the human heart or specific sins of Job before his affliction, Elihu places chief stress upon Job's self-righteous arraignment of God and on the pride that must have existed all the time, only to be brought to the surface by his affliction.

These have already been touched upon, but not with Elihu's emphasis.

Read Job 32 to 37.

What, from these speeches, is the character of Elihu as compared with the other three men?

¶19. Perhaps the sweeping greatness of the book of Job, generally recognized as one of the greatest books of all time, is, naturally enough, in the speeches of Jehovah. Considering the power of certain passages, such as 38:6-11, 31, 39-41, 39:5-10, and the meaning of the whole in the light of the discussion in ¶13,

Read Job 38 to 41.

¶20. What is the effect upon Job?

Read Job 40:3-5 and 42:1-6.

¶21. What is Job's final state? And what is the turning point of his affliction? Noting especially verse 10*a*,

Read the prose epilogue, Job 42:7-17.

¶22. The general character and message of the book of Job.

(1) One must by this time have been convinced that Job is a wisdom book, not merely because of the poem on wisdom in chapter 28, but (*a*) because of the recurrence of the wisdom terms,[a] like instruction, reproof, wisdom, etc.; and (*b*) because of the general point of view of the whole book. Job is not arraigned in prophetic discourses, but argued with; his atten-

[a]Sometimes the wisdom terms that occur in the English versions do not represent strictly wisdom words in the Hebrew; but the Hebrew text will not bear out the wisdom character less definitely than the English.

tion is called chiefly, not to his rebelliousness, but to his foolish failure to understand the power, holiness, and unsearchableness of God; and his repentance is of the fact that he had hidden counsel with words without knowledge and had spoken beyond his ken. The book reflects, of course, prophetic and even priestly currents of thought, but it is distinctly surcharged with the spirit of Hebrew wisdom.

(2) It has been customary in some quarters to regard Job almost as a Platonic dialogue on the problem of evil. Such a position seems to ignore completely the character of the Hebrew mind. One of the most impossible views in the history of Biblical interpretation is the one that makes the author of the book of Job look with allowance upon Job's arraignment of God and of the moral order of the world. The book's attitude toward this arraignment, as has been seen, is reflected in the Jehovah-speeches concerning "darkening counsel." Job is not a search into the problem of evil, such as a Greek might write, but a pronouncement upon the problem of evil—a pronouncement that reflects, of course, long and painstaking thought and meditation upon the subject. One aspect of this pronouncement that is most akin to the Pauline ideas of sin and grace has already been treated. The main viewpoints of the book as a whole, in addition to this one, are

(*a*) All suffering is not punitive; some is a necessary testing process. If always, everywhere, and immediately it pays to be righteous, the retort of Satan is apposite: "Doth Job fear God for naught?" Only through trial and stress is righteousness made

apparent (compare Judges 3:4). The book of Job tells one instance of how God tested out an ancient saint, Job. Furthermore there is dross and alloy in the best of men and a purifying process is demanded (5:17).[a] The book of Proverbs probably goes further in this line of thinking than does Job or the Wisdom of ben-Sira. It intimates that suffering may be the mark of divine favor and love, just as when a man is seen chastening a boy one might infer that the man is the lad's father and has interest in the lad's behavior beyond his interest in the behavior of the other boys (Prov. 3:11, 12).

(*b*) But above and beyond all suggestions toward a solution of the problem of suffering and evil is the fact of the inscrutableness of the ways of God. Man is too small and petty to fathom God; the only wise course is humbly and in supreme faith and trust to accept him.[b]

(*c*) God will bring things out all right in the end. This is not only the teaching of the epilogue, but is implicit in the earlier speeches of Eliphaz. In weighing this aspect and the story of the final restoration of Job to double prosperity, one should consider that a world in which in the long stretches of eter-

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[a] So the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, or the Wisdom of ben-Sira (4: 17, 18), says of Wisdom's ways:

> For at first she will walk with him in crooked ways,
> And will bring fear and dread upon him,
> And torment him with her discipline,
> Until she may trust his soul, and try him by the judgments:
> Then she will return again the straight way unto him,
> And will gladden him, and reveal to him her secrets.

[b] Compare 2 Esdras 5:33.

nity the righteous and loving have normally and permanently a career of suffering and the wicked the opposite, is not a world in which moral order reigns.

¶23. Now, after reviewing the points brought out in this treatment of Job,

Read Job at a sitting, letting the full power of individual passages and the sweep of the entire book flow through your whole being. There are some scholars who think that Job, in many places at least, represents not so much an individual as the Israelite community in its sufferings: what do you think of this view? Do you think the book is rightly regarded as one of the world's masterpieces?

CHAPTER XVI

THE LAMENTATIONS AND THE SONG OF SONGS

§ 45. Lamentations.

¶1. It has already been learned that the Hebrew Bible is composed of three groups or canons: the Law, the Prophets, and the "Other Writings." Within this last group is an interesting subgroup, the five Megilloth, or ritual "rolls," designated to be read at the sacred seasons: The Song of Songs at the Passover, Ruth at Pentecost, Lamentations on the Day of the Destruction of Jerusalem, Ecclesiastes at the feast of Tabernacles, and Esther at the feast of Purim. Of these, Ruth and Esther have been treated with the prophetic and priestly narratives and Ecclesiastes with the wisdom books; there remain for study at this juncture Lamentations and the Song of Songs. By most students both of these books would have been studied along with one of the other groups; by some both would have been included in the wisdom literature, but this is precluded by the definition of the wisdom literature advocated in the present outline. It has been thought best to treat them here, just before the treatment of the Psalms, as two poetical books more closely allied to some of the Psalms in poetical form and character than any other books of the Old Testament.

¶2. Perhaps as good a summary of the character of Lamentations as could be given for the present purpose is that of Kent, in "The Student's Old

Testament: The Songs, Hymns, and Prayers of the Old Testament."* He says:

The book of Lamentations is the most conventional and stereotyped of all the Old Testament writings. Four of its five chapters consist of acrostics in which each succeeding verse or group of verses begins with a succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Even though the fifth chapter is not an acrostic, it has twenty-two verses corresponding to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. In the first and second chapters each verse contains three lines, in the fourth a couplet of but two lines. These rigid limitations in structure necessarily impede the free development of the thought. While these dirges lack the freedom and spontaneity of many other Hebrew poems, they are not deficient in strong emotion and contain a remarkably vivid portrayal of the incidents and experiences connected with the destruction of Jerusalem. The poet's reason for employing the acrostic structure was evidently to aid the memory. His motive in writing was liturgical—that is, to furnish hymns that might be readily remembered and chanted, probably in connection with the fasts which were observed in commemoration of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple. In the seventh chapter of Zechariah the prophet refers to such fasts which in his day had already been observed for seventy years, beginning with the destruction of the temple in 586 B.C. In form and content these poems were well adapted to this liturgical use. They kept alive in vivid form the memories of Israel's tragic experience. They aimed to impress upon the minds of the people the lessons taught by their past, "lest they forget." They also aimed to interpret the meaning of those experiences and to justify Jehovah's rigorous dealing with his people, and thus to arouse in the heart of the nation faith and adoration even in the presence of overwhelming calamity. To the historian they are of inestimable value, for

*Page 18.

they reveal the soul of the race and give contemporary pictures of conditions in Jerusalem in the days preceding and following its overthrow, regarding which Israel's historians are almost silent.

¶3. The first acrostic or alphabetic poem: Lamentations 1.

The first seven verses dwell upon the desolation of the city. At verse 8 the reason for that desolation (already mentioned in verse 5) seems to assume the prominent place which it retains through the remainder of the poem. It has been noted, also, that in verses 1-11 the poet speaks, whereas usually in verses 12-22 the city itself is the speaker. Drinking in its desolate and penitent wail,

Read Lamentations 1.

¶4. Observe the type of the parallelism in the first four chapters. Compare 1:1—three long parallel lines or sentences, the third effectively reversing the order of the ideas. In verse 5 the second line forms with the first a synthetic parallellism; the third is synonymous with the first. Compare 2:11, where two synonymous lines are followed by a synthetic one completing the sense of the first two. The parallelisms, however, do not seem always perfect, and a parallelism sometimes occurs in Lamentations 1 and 2 within the sentence or clause that forms the third of a verse. This fact and the fact that the verse-third is made up of a longer line followed by a shorter, coupled with a similar phenomenon elsewhere, has helped scholars as much as anything else to look beyond parallelism to Hebrew meter.

Peake says:

The most noteworthy literary feature of the book is the metrical structure of the first four chapters. These are written in Qina rhythm, which we have already learned to recognize as Jeremiah's favorite meter. The credit for establishing the existence of this meter belongs to Budde, though Lowth and other scholars had to some extent anticipated his results. The name, Qina, or lamentation, rhythm was given to it by Budde because he considered that it was the meter in which dirges over the dead were uttered, and thus came to be used for elegies over national misfortunes. This meter was, however, by no means exclusively employed for lamentations, so that the term "Qina rhythm" is retained rather as a convenient than strictly accurate designation.[a] The characteristic feature of this rhythm is that it consists of long lines divided into two unequal parts, the second part being shorter than the first.*

¶5. The second poem takes up, first, Jehovah's wrath and punishment; then it bewails the disaster and turns to a call to prayer.

Read Lamentations 2.

Note the climax of the disaster in the enemy's joy (compare Nahum 3:19, Obad. 12, Ezek. 35:15).

Observe that the terms in which Jerusalem's sin is described are partly prophetic ("rebellion," 1:18 and 20), but predominantly priestly ("unclean," "filthiness," 1:8, 9, and 17). The whole tone of Jehovah's anger, however, seems to reflect the prophetic view of sin, but the chief interest seems to cen-

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[a]Budde thinks scholars have misunderstood somewhat his original statements on these matters. See his article in Hastings's Bible Dictionary.

*The New Century Bible, "Jeremiah," Vol. II., pages 290 and 291.

ter in the priestly institutions, the sanctuary and the solemn assembly.

¶6. The third poem. First, the poet bemoans the desolation in a personal tone, from which fact the question arises whether he speaks for himself or as the mouthpiece of the community; then appears the voice of faith and trust (verses 19-39), followed by a call to prayer in verse 40 and the assurance of the divine answer in verse 55.

Read Lamentations 3.

Compare verses 10 and 14 with Job and the call to faith (especially verse 22) with Eliphaz. Compare the whole of Lamentations in its view of evil and sin with Job 3 to 21 and 38:1 or 32:1 to 42:6. Keep these comparisons in mind as you proceed.

The reason this poem consists of sixty-six verses, while the others have twenty-two, is due not to a difference in the length of the poems, but to the fact that here three successive lines begin with each letter of the alphabet, whereas in the other chapters only the first line of each three follows the alphabetic scheme. The versifier has failed here to catch the significance of this fact: twenty-two verses would suit this chapter's real form much better.

¶7. The fourth acrostic.

Read Lamentations 4.

Observe that the height of punishment is in being made heartless and cruel (verses 3 and 10). Does the height and persistence of the punishment, the consciousness of specific previous sins, or the deep sense of unworthiness suggest verse 6*a*? Which do you think?

Note that the elders are mentioned along with prophets and priests. Compare Ezekiel 8:1.

The source of help must be divine, not human (verse 17).

¶8. The fifth poem (not an acrostic) is a prayer for restoration or regeneration, according to the translation and interpretation of verse 21.

Read Lamentations 5.

Compare verse 7 with Jeremiah 31:29 and Ezekiel 18:1-4.

§ 46. The Song of Songs.

¶1. (1) There are amongst Bible students two methods of interpreting the Song of Songs—the allegorical and the literal; and under either method it may be regarded as a drama or as a collection of songs. The present study does not propose to take sides on this question, but aims to present what a general view discloses, referring the student to the commentaries and treatises for further study.

The first problem in studying an allegory is to find out what it allegorizes. Therefore, whether the Song of Songs be an allegory or not, the first task will be to see what picture of Oriental love it presents, for that it does present a picture of Oriental love one will hardly be disposed to deny. Since many scholars regard it as a collection of poems, it is well to take what might seem quite apparent division points in the book and study what is true of these divisions under any theory of the unity of the book and then ask certain elementary questions concerning its unity.

(2) To understand the story of Oriental love given in the book one should recall the love stories of Isaac and Rebekah (Gen. 24), of Jacob and Rachel (Gen. 29), of Moses and Zipporah (Ex. 2:16-22),* of Ruth and Boaz, and of Esther and the Persian king.**

¶2. Read Song of Songs 1:1-8.

Note the statement of the second line of verse 4 and the beautiful pastoral love and imagery of verse 7. Observe that a woman seems to be the speaker in all or most of verse 7, but that verse 8 seems antiphonal—the speaker is answered by an individual or a chorus that calls her the "fairest among women."

¶3. Read Song of Songs 1:9 to 2:6.

Note the antiphonal character of 2:2, 3 (verse 2, the man speaking, and verse 3, the woman). Do not be too hasty in deciding other points.

¶4. Read Song of Songs 2:7 to 3:5.

Is a man or a woman the speaker here? Observe that, if one follow the more probable rendering of the last clause as "until it please," the section begins and ends with a request reflecting the view that the highest love between man and woman is not something to be created by a stimulus of the will, but that it comes in deeper and more illusive ways.

Compare 2:10-13 to Tennyson's familiar lines in "Locksley Hall," noting the same poetic feeling as well as the same imagery in both passages:

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*Compare the "Outline for the Study of Old Testament History," § 7, ¶ 10, § 9, ¶¶ 2-4, and § 14, ¶ 7.

**See the books of Ruth and Esther; also § 38, pages 175 ff.

In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;
In the spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove;
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

¶5. Read Song of Songs 3:6-11.

The passage is quite difficult.

¶6. Read Song of Songs 4:1 to 5:1.

The first few verses sound like a man's speech, and 4:8, 9 and 5:1 are certainly the words of a man. Beneath the freedom of the Oriental imagery is the spirit of true love extolling the physical beauty of a sweetheart. To-day the comparisons of 4:1 and 2 seem grotesque. The latter refers to the way in which really pretty teeth, especially the upper ones, arrange themselves in perfectly matched pairs; the former indicates, it seems, how a large flock of goats grazing alongside and ranging over the top of a treeless mountain might remind an Oriental shepherd of a giant female figure with long flowing hair falling over her shoulders.

¶7. Read Song of Songs 5:2 to 6:3.

Note that a woman speaks, telling first what her lover says. In 5:9 another voice or chorus of voices asks a very natural question for an outsider. The woman's answer in effect is, "Though he be nothing to you, he is everything to me." Get the force and beauty of this portrayal of universal passion. Another query from the antiphonal individual or chorus is found in 6:1.

¶8. Read Song of Songs 6:4-9.

A man speaks, repeating a part of 4:1-6. Consider the high ideal of monogamous marriage in verses 8 and 9: the lover prefers his bride to all the harem of Solomon.

¶9. Read Song of Songs 6:10-13.

¶10. Read Song of Songs 7:1-9.

Such a praise of "the human form divine" as is expressed in Greek sculpture and modern painting is even more realistic in verse. Either the man or, as some think, a chorus of female admirers speaks.

¶11. Read Song of Songs 7:10 to 8:7.

Observe that the last part of 8:4 is antiphonal. The climax of the book is 8:6, 7—love is as strong as death and demands absolute faithfulness in its mate. At its best, it is unquenchable and is of more worth than all else beside.

¶12. Read Song of Songs 8:8-14.

In verses 8 and 9 the brothers (or sisters or both) speak of a sister's extreme youth and raise the problem of her chastity. Verse 10 seems to be her answer asserting her perfect chasteness. The remainder of the passage is not so clear.

¶13. The book has so far been considered as a disconnected series of love poems.

(1) Certainly, if the whole be not allegorical but literal, in the midst of ancient polygamy and even in modern times, so long as marriages are contracted for reasons of wealth or convenience there is abundant need for its message on the monogamous love of man and woman, when they love their best. Through the larger part of Jewish and Christian

history the book has been interpreted allegorically and made to represent the relation between God or the Christ and his Church. Which view appeals to you? If the latter, consider carefully the more important applications of the story as you have learned to interpret it. For details see the older commentaries.

(2) On the question of the unity of the book, observe that one refrain runs through the book, appearing in 2:7, 3:5, and 8:4, and that it appears with significant variation in 5:8. Such variations in refrains are not infrequent in modern verse: compare "Hosanna to your king" in "The Holy City," changed very effectively to "Hosanna forevermore" in the last stanza, and Poe's variants in "The Raven": "Only this, and nothing more," "Nameless here forevermore," "Quoth the Raven, Nevermore," etc. Many scholars feel also that a similar style and tone pervades the entire book and that the whole reaches out toward the climax of 8:1-7.

Many deem the book an elaborate dramatic poem. The student may be referred for this view to Harper's little volume in the Cambridge Bible.*

¶14. The Syriac version calls the Song of Songs "The Wisdom of Wisdoms," and modern scholars usually class it as a wisdom book. This classification is due partly, it would seem, to its having been attributed to Solomon, partly to a loose definition of the wisdom literature that makes it include all writing

*See especially pages 63-73, where the author attempts to edit the book itself as a drama.

not prophetic or priestly in tone or else all that flows out of the common daily life of the people. Certain it is that the literary flavor of the Song of Songs, like that of wisdom, comes from the life of the people; but while the wisdom literature arises from this as a source, it becomes a highly specialized type, and there is not the slightest ground for regarding the Song of Songs as a representative of this type.

If taken literally, the Song of Songs represents the folk-literary type of Hebrew literature bathed in the highest idealism of which the common life of men is capable. If the book is allegorical, it is probably to be counted as strictly prophetic in tone.

¶15. Now, noting the vast difference in the tone and character of the two books and the characteristics of each as you have learned to view them,

Read at a sitting Lamentations and the Song of Songs.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

§ 47. The Book of Psalms, the Climax of Old Testament Religious Devotion.

¶1. The present purpose is not the mastery of each particular Psalm—that would require a course as long as the present "Outline" in its entirety. The aim is rather to learn the general character of the Psalms and to study in more detail a few of the greatest and most familiar, both as illustrations of the various groups and for their own intrinsic merit.

The Psalms, it must be insisted, do not reach higher heights than do, for example, Isaiah 53, Micah 6:6-8, or Hosea 11 in their respective spheres. They represent rather the culmination of Old Testament trust and devotion and sense of the divine care and fellowship, which, after all, is the heart of religion. As John Arnd expresses it, "What the heart is in man, the Psalter is in the Bible."* Kirkpatrick's statement is likewise instructive:

> The importance of the Psalter for a just appreciation of the history of Israel is obvious. How meager an idea of the higher religious life of Israel should we derive from the Historical Books apart from the Prophets; how imperfect still would be the picture drawn from the Historical Books and the Prophets without the warmth of coloring added to it by the Psalms. These alone give us

*Quoted by Kautzsch, book cited, page 28, and also by Davison, New Century Bible, "The Psalms," Vol. I., page 6.

a glimpse into the inner religion of the best spirits in the nation, and bear witness to the faith, the love, the devotion of pious souls even under the limitations of the Old Covenant.*

The Psalms exhibit the three main streams of Hebrew thought: some are distinctly of the wisdom type, while others reflect the prophetic and priestly ideals respectively. In particular, it is interesting to go through the Psalms and note the verses that reflect the positions of the Job, Eliphaz, and Jehovah speeches of the Job-poem.

The Psalter has been called "The hymn book of the second temple," and its central place in Jewish and Christian worship attests how fully it reflects that aspect of religion that is under the special guardianship of the priesthood. The frequent references to the temple, the holy hill of Zion, and the like show further the priestly influence; and when thanksgiving and contriteness of spirit are called true "sacrifices" one discerns a prophetic permeation of the priestly ideal, perhaps as much as such a conflict between the prophetic and the priestly as appears in the sermons of Amos and Isaiah.

Although the wisdom and priestly strains run through the Psalter, one feels that it evinces preeminently the prophetic spirit, and even that its wisdom is largely prophetic wisdom and its worship prophetic worship. The poetic form, moreover, of the Psalms grows, perhaps, out of the early poem-oracles of the prophets and is most closely allied to

*The Cambridge Bible, "The Psalms," Book I., page xi.

the prophetic poems that constitute the principal portions of the prophetic writings.[a]

¶2. Read Psalm 1.

(*a*) Observe that verse 1 seems to have an introductory statement, "Blessed is the man," followed by three, instead of two, synonymous lines,

> That walketh not in the counsel of the wicked,
> Nor standeth in the way of sinners,
> Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

This is an interesting variation of the basic form of parallelism, comparable to the variations of the standard English forms:[1] compare §39, ¶2. Verses 2 and 5 are synonymous parallelisms of two members each; verse 3 contains first a synthetic parallelism in two members or lines, followed by two synonymous lines completing the sentence and thus forming altogether a kind of synthetic stanza; verse 6 is an antithetic parallelism.

(*b*) The Psalm is evidently a wisdom Psalm. Its whole ideal is one of the wisdom, rather than of the duty, of doing right. The wicked are not like reb-

[a]As the question of prophetic poetic form is a vexed one, the problem was ignored in the study of the prophets and the emphasis placed on the prophetic message. More advanced study of the prophets should consider their poetic character, for the prophetic sermon style rises not out of homiletic exposition, but out of the earlier poem-oracles, as has been indicated.

[1]This Psalm presents, therefore, an interesting study in verse form. The instructor might decide at this point what emphasis he prefers to give to questions of poetry and meter: only a few further aspects will be specifically mentioned in the text.

els, but like chaff; and they are to perish or be exterminated, not punished. Note also the word "scoffer" or "scorner." Verse 2 is in keeping with the wisdom doctrine which asserts the identity of wisdom and the law of Jehovah. The verse hardly presents a picture, as Briggs holds, of a "perfect scribe": this is a later ideal.

Like most wisdom Psalms, the poem is more didactic than purely lyric, but it presents its lesson in very attractive imagery.

(*c*) Do you think the words "walk," "stand," "sit," and "wicked," "sinners," "scoffers," absolutely synonymous as here used, or do they represent climaxes?

(*d*) The American Standard Version is more accurate, but its use of the translation "Jehovah" instead of "Lord," while preferable in prose, detracts from the devotional and poetic effect of the Psalms: it is better therefore in this respect to follow the Authorized and the English Revised Versions.

(*e*) Now, with these points in mind,

Reread the Psalm.

¶3. Read Psalm 2.

(*a*) This Psalm reflects the priestly interest in the "holy hill" and wisdom's call to prudence; Jehovah, too, is moved to laughter at the foolishness of men rather than to anger at their insurrection: yet the Psalm represents the spirit of an ancient prophetic oracle against the enemies of the people of Jehovah. If it refers to a contemporary Hebrew king, it is in form quite like an ancient oracle; if it

has a predominantly Messianic meaning, it is an apocalyptic poem in the style of the ancient poem-oracle.

(*b*) Note the odd line in verse 2. What sort of parallelism makes up the several verses of the Psalm?

Observe that verses 1-3 describe the situation, verses 4-6 and 7-9 give Jehovah's attitude; verses 10 to 12 are an exhortation to heathen kings. This division brings forward the question as to whether Hebrew poems are marked by strophes or stanzas as in English verse. Stanzas formed by repetition of the same verse form are later and artificial developments of stanzas or strophes marked by changes of subject matter. The Hebrew poet, therefore, naturally needed stanzas. Sometimes his stanzas are artificially marked acrostically, for instance, as in Psalm 119, or by refrains, as in the Song of Songs, and in Psalm 99:3*b*, 5*c*, 9*c*, and 107:8, 15, 21, and 31, etc.

(*c*) The Psalm records a present rebellion and characteristically points to the real facts as they appear to the divine mind and as they will appear to men in the outcome.

Reread the Psalm.

¶4. (1) A constant problem of Old Testament thought arose out of the fact that the righteous often suffer excessively, and a constant note in the prophetic preaching was a clarion call to the faith that God rules in spite of appearances to the contrary and that deliverance and salvation are forthcoming. The enemy seems to have the better of Jehovah's

people, and the wicked men within the nation the better of the righteous. "How long will it remain so?" is the ever-recurring question, as has been seen in the study of the prophets. A constant longing for the reversal of the situation and for a vindication of the righteousness of Jehovah and of his worshipers breathes through the Psalms. Now, with these facts in mind,

Read Psalms 3 to 7.

A detailed study of each Psalm is impossible, as has been previously indicated. Mark the passages that strike you; but before using them as texts or putting too much faith in the English renderings, one should consult good commentaries.

(2) There comes up here also the question of the "I" and "me" of the Psalms. Many scholars think they represent usually the Hebrew nation, or at least the righteous "remnant" of the nation; others are equally insistent on the personal, individual experience expressed in the "I" and "me." Many on each side of the question make concessions, large or small, to the opposite view. Keep the question before you especially in considering assertions of personal intergity and imprecations upon enemies. Do not be too hasty in your decision; certainly you should not decide on the basis merely of the Psalms just read.

¶5. Read Psalm 8.

(*a*) Some think the chief subject of this Psalm to be the dignity of man, and that the translation of verse 4 should be "How great is man," etc. In this view the meaning is, "When I consider the heavens,

how great is man, that thou art mindful of him, rather than of them, and hast made him so great?" The more usual view is that the subject of the Psalm is God's praiseworthiness as indicated in the grace through which he chooses out insignificant man for abundant honor.

(*b*) Verses 7 and 8 seem to the modern mind an anticlimax; but from the point of view of the ancient man the conquest of the animal world, by taming some and destroying others, was a mark of man's power and dignity comparable to steam, electricity, and aircraft to-day.

(*c*) Now, catching the greatness of the thought in whichever of the two views you take and the depth of cosmic feeling upon either view,

Reread Psalm 8.

¶6. The next six Psalms reflect the same viewpoint as Psalms 3 to 7. Compare ¶4 (1) and

Read Psalms 9 to 13; then read Psalms 14 and 53. Observe that these last two are nearly alike: keep this fact in mind for further reference. They are of a distinctly wisdom type. Why? Compare 14:1*a* and 10:4*b*, 6*a*, 11*a*.

Psalms of the same general viewpoint frequently reflect different moods: compare 9:1, 10:1, and 13:1. Note the ever-recurring query, "How long?"

¶7. The man whom God approves.

Read Psalm 15.

Observe that the priestly question of verse 1 is answered, not in ritual, but in moral terms. What are the points mentioned as characteristic of God's "guest-friend"? Compare the moral standard of the

Holiness Code, Leviticus 19; also compare Job 29:12-16 and Romans 12.

¶8. Next come three Psalms on the constantly recurring theme of the Psalter (compare ¶4 (1)). Noting particularly the familiar passages, especially in Psalm 16, and the description of Jehovah in Psalm 18, in the same strain as the Jehovah-speeches of Job,

Read Psalms 16 to 18.

Compare Peter's and Paul's uses of Psalm 16:10 according to Acts 2:25-31 and 13:35-37.

¶9. Nature declares God's glory and the law leads man to perfection—one of the great Psalms.

Read Psalm 19.

Toy counts this and Psalm 8 as wisdom Psalms—perhaps because they represent a philosophical appreciation of nature—and he identifies Hebrew wisdom with Hebrew reflective thought. It has been seen, however, that the prophets represent Hebrew philosophy not less than the wise men.

The law of the Lord makes wise the simple (verse 7) and is to be desired above gold for value and above honey for sweetness. This, of course, is the view of wisdom. But the commandments are also pure and the fear of Jehovah is clean (verses 8 and 9), and the desire of the Psalmist is to be "clear" (verses 12 and 13). What viewpoint is this?

Briggs calls verses 7-14 didactic, but, though the subject may be a prosaic one for a lyric, these verses seem rather a lyric praise of the perfection of the law and a fervent prayer from the depths of the heart for a spotless life and for the divine approval.

¶10. The main theme of the Psalter recurs again in three Psalms, the last being the one Jesus recalls on the cross.[1]

Noting in Psalm 22 the fine phrase of verse 3, the skeptic's view (verse 7), the doctrine of verses 26*a* and 28*a* and the two divisions—the present outlook, 1-21, and the future outcome, 22-31—and recalling the New Testament view of verse 18,

Read Psalms 20 to 22.

¶11. The universal favorite.

The Old Testament's highest reaches of the figure of a shepherd in verses 1-4 pass in verse 5 into the figure of the human host and guest-friend. Animal life seems incapable of showing forth all that God does for his worshiper. Compare the way in which Jesus, after using a higher stretch of the shepherd figure in the parable of the lost sheep, passes into the figure of human love in the story of the prodigal son and his bereft father. The Psalm reflects in the highest degree the prophetic faith and trust. For further interpretation seek a good commentary, but, getting its full message of simple thankfulness and trust,

Read Psalm 23.

¶12. Psalm 24.

Compare verses 3-6 with Psalm 15. Verses 1 and 2 give one of the Bible's finest statements of the complete lordship of God. Verses 7-10 constitute

[1]Some think Jesus quoted the whole Psalm or meant to refer to the whole by mentioning the first verse; but most think he expressed only the sense of complete forsakeness contained in the first verse.

a striking picture of a triumphal entry: note its movement. Now

Read the Psalm.

¶13. Read Psalms 25-31 and 33-36—variant expressions of the great theme of, first, the connection in the long run between sin and calamity, as over against the seeming prosperity of the wicked; and of, second, trust in the vindication of God and in the coming deliverance. Compare the several characters of the book of Job with sentiments expressed in these Psalms. Do you discern a deeper sense of sin here than in previous Psalms? This deeper sense of sin finds one of its classic expressions in Psalm 32, the next one to be considered.

¶14. The reward of the forgiven man.

Perhaps this Psalm does not reach the spiritual height of the Great Penitential (Psalm 51): here, not so much the joy of forgiven sin as the good fortune that follows the forgiven man seems, as shown in verses 6 and 10, the point of the Psalmist. Compare Psalm 1: there, too, "blessedness" means, likely, "good fortune"; but Psalm 32 goes beyond Psalm 1 in the direction of the Pauline statement: not the sinless man, but the forgiven man (verse 1) and the trusting man (verse 10*a*) are blessed; not by obedience to law, but by grace and faith, comes salvation. Similarly Briggs remarks:

> In Psalm 1:1 the righteous man, who was entirely conformed to the Law, was thus congratulated; here, the one who has been a transgressor, but now, after a period of divine chastisement, enjoys forgiveness and reinstatement in the divine favor. The three chief synonymous

terms for sin are used to comprehend it in all its forms: *transgression*, the violation of divine command whether oral or written in law; *sin*, the failure from the normal aim or purpose in life; *iniquity*, the perverse turning aside from the proper course of life. These forms of sin had incurred the divine displeasure, and had to be removed in order to a restoration to favor. Each term for sin has its appropriate predicate, which is not to be regarded as pecuilar to that conception of sin rather than any other, but is in order to balance the threefold sin, with a threefold deliverance from it.*

Now, with these points in mind, and withholding final judgment on them until Psalm 51 is studied,

Read Psalm 32.

¶15. The great wisdom Psalm.

Noting especially the summary in verse 11 of the trend of world forces and recalling its use by Jesus in one of the beautitudes,

Read Psalm 37.

The victory of the forces of democracy and peace over autocracy and the right of might illustrates how deeply the Psalmist read the facts and laws of life.

Note that the observations in the Psalm are those of a typical sage, and that sin is viewed from the standpoint of its foolishness.

¶16. Four penitential Psalms.

Read Psalms 38 to 41.

Observe that the main theme of the Psalter frequently appears when it is not the dominant one or when a more individual and unique theme runs by its side.

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*International Critical Commentary, "The Psalms," Vol. I., pages 276 and 277.

¶17. Note that Psalm 41:13 is a doxology. Compare Psalm 72:18 and 19, 89:52, 106:48. The text of the Revised Version shows that these doxologies mark the end of successive books. Whether these "books" are later divisions in the Psalter made by the rabbis to correspond with the five books of Moses, or whether they represent successive collections of Psalms, need not be inquired into at this point. It is noteworthy, however, that older collections seem to be used in the Psalter. Observe that the first two Psalms are not attributed to any author: that there follows a group designated as Davidic. Sometimes, as in Psalm 15, there appears a simple title like "A Psalm of David"; sometimes a further description is given. Most of the Psalms of Book I. (Psalms 1-41) are thus marked as Davidic. The same is true, to a less degree, of Book II., at the close of which, following one headed "A Psalm of Solomon," is appended an interesting note.

Read Psalm 72:20.

The next book contains, nevertheless, one Psalm, the eighty-sixth, headed "A Prayer of David," and there are several attributed to David in the later books. Books II. and III. contain a number entitled "A Psalm (or Maschil) of the Sons of Korah" or "A Psalm of Asaph." Some scholars think that these facts point to several collections older than the present Psalter. Compare the collections of older poems called "The Wars of Jehovah" and "The Book of Jasher" (Num. 21:14, Joshua 10:13, 2 Sam. 1:18). Further evidence of such earlier collections of Psalms, many feel, is found in the way Psalm 14

of Book I. appears, slightly modified, in Book II. as Psalm 53.

¶18. Book II. opens with three Psalms on the main theme of the Psalter, two from the "Sons of Korah" group, and one (Psalm 43) anonymous unless it was originally a part of Psalm 42. Note the refrain running through these two Psalms, 42:5 and 11 and 43:5; compare also 42:9*b* and 43:2*b*. Observe the favorite passage opening Psalm 42 and the doctrine of grace as *versus* human strength in 44:3. These Psalms are especially plaintive and downcast in tone: at the close the way is dark.

Read Psalms 42 to 44.

¶19. Psalm 45 is in the same strain as the Song of Songs, and, like it, may have gotten its place in the Old Testament canon from an allegorical interpretation of its contents.

Read the Psalm.

Do you consider the Psalm allegorical or literal?

¶20. The next three Psalms strike a far different note from the last three on the main theme of the Psalter. The latter evinces a faint trust of the larger hope; these manifest a glorious realization of triumph and deliverance. Two of the three have been general favorites, Psalm 46 being in the Psalter what Luther's great hymn, "A mighty fortress is our God," is in the hymnology of Christendom. They are all from the "Sons of Korah" group, and many scholars think they were written in the days of Isaiah and Hezekiah on the occasion of the deliverance of Judah from Sennacherib's invasion.

Compare §12, ¶4 and §13, ¶4 and Byron's poem on "The Destruction of Sennacherib," there referred to. Now,

Read Psalms 46 to 48.

¶21. Psalm 49 may be called the Ecclesiastes Psalm. It has the same interest in parable and saying (Eccl. 12:9), the same wavering and doubt (Ps. 44:10), and the same ethical note in its conclusion.

Read the Psalm.

¶22. The next two Psalms exhibit the problem of true sacrifices. Two spiritual sacrifices are made supreme, it seems, thanksgiving and penitence. Psalm 51 is "The Great Penitential." If Psalm 32 thinks of the blessings God has in store as offered not (as in Ps. 1) to the perfect, but to the forgiven, man, this Psalm goes as far beyond the thirty-second as it does beyond the first Psalm. It looks not to the outside blessings God may give, but to the inner joy of forgiven sin and restored communion (verses 11 and 12) and to a deliverance from the power of sin by a genuine regeneration (verse 10; compare Jer. 31:33, Ezek. 11:19, and §36, ¶3 (2) and ¶9).

With the problem of sacrifice in mind and opening your heart to the sense of sin and the yearning for the highest spiritual salvation and communion expessed in the Great Penitential,

Read Psalms 50 and 51.

¶23. In the next thirteen Psalms the main theme of the Psalter is entwined with varying viewpoints. The present study cannot go into details regarding

each Psalm; therefore, with your mind on the lookout for the great passages and the variant notes,

Read Psalms 52 to 64.

Psalm 53 has already been considered in ¶6. Note, among other things (Ps. 55:17), the stated hours for Jewish prayer (compare Dan. 6:10); the expression of the one hope (56:9); the refrain of Psalm 62.

¶24. The next four Psalms manifest the wider outlook of the prophets and their belief that the religion of Jehovah is a religion for the world. These Psalms set forth God's goodness as displayed in nature and in history. The climax of the Psalter's emphasis on the character of God is in 68:20, where he is designated as "a God of deliverances." Observing especially the universalistic note,

Read Psalms 65 to 68.

¶25. The second book of Psalms closes with four more Psalms on the ever-recurring theme, the untoward situation, and the waiting in faith, but in tempation to doubt, for God's coming deliverance and vindication of himself and his servants. The closing Psalm of this group, headed "A Psalm of Solomon," looks not to an intermediate but to a final triumph of God and his righteousness. Dwelling especially on Psalm 72,

Read Psalms 69 to 72.

Compare the several statements with those of Job and Eliphaz in the Job-poem. Note the spiritual view of sacrifice appearing again in 69:30 and 31.

¶26. Book III. opens with five Psalms on the recurring theme. Note how persistent was the temp-

tation to skepticism—the pious author of Psalm 73 had almost slipped (verse 2; compare 77:9, 10), and a large group openly say (verse 11) that God takes no cognizance of the affairs of men. Compare Job, Malachi 2:17 and 3:13-15, and various Psalms. Past deliverances, especially that of the Exodus, keep reminding faithful ones to hope in God.

Read Psalms 73 to 77.

¶27. (1) Psalm 78 is a lengthy one on God's law and God's deliverances in the wilderness, in Egypt, and in Canaan; and on the rejection of Joseph or Israel, the Northern Kingdom, and the selection or election of Judah and David.

Read the Psalm. Now,

(2) Read Psalm 80:8-19 and Psalms 81 and 83, on the deliverances of God, especially that from Egypt; and Psalm 89, which promises permanence to the Davidic kingdom. Consider especially the ethical note in verse 14. Now,

¶28. Read Psalms 79 and 80, on the question "How long?" and Psalm 82, which emphasizes, what is mentioned less prominently in other Psalms in this group, God's superiority to other deities.

¶29. (*a*) Psalm 84 is a beautiful and deservedly popular one on the joy of worship. The Psalmist is probably not bemoaning the fate of the temple so much as envying the birds that build their nests there.

Read Psalm 84.

(*b*) Read also Psalm 87, on the one hand a glorification of Zion, on the other an outlook toward the world. Compare ¶24.

¶30. Psalms 85, 86, and 88 are on the main theme of the Psalter, perhaps the most familiar and notable passage being 85:10.

Read these Psalms.

¶31. Book IV. opens with a familiar and truly great Psalm in the minor key. There is no more "pipe-organ-sounding" note in literature. It reflects the ever-recurring "How long?" and the sense of sin of the main theme and the penitential Psalms. The wisdom note appears in verse 12 and a genuine prophetic yearning in verses 16 and 17.

Read Psalm 90.

¶32. In quite a different strain is the next Psalm, also a general favorite. Its theme is the divine care and protection. Observing also the mystic feeling of verse 1*a* and recalling the New Testament use of verses 10-12,

Read Psalm 91.

¶33. Psalms 92, 94, and 102 are on the main theme of the Psalter.

Read these Psalms.

¶34. Almost a new note is struck in Psalms 93 and 95 to 101—a note of joyousness ("a new song," "a joyful noise," "The Lord reigneth," etc.). There is also a note of universalism, as in 95:3, 96:10, 97:1, 98:4, 100:1, and in the refrain of 96:13, 98:9. These Psalms contain many familiar and beautiful passages.

Read Psalms 93 and 95 to 101.

¶35. Psalm 103 catches some of the penitence and sense of forgiven sin of the Great Penitential; some of the depths of Psalm 90, though in a less noble

strain; and the note of thanksgiving of the Hallelujah Psalms soon to be studied, along with some of the faith and trust of the universal favorite (Ps. 23): no wonder it is so generally loved.

Read the Psalm.

¶36. (1) With the exception of thirteen, the remaining Psalms of the Psalter belong to two groups. The thirteen will be treated first, and then the two groups.

Psalm 108 seems to be made up of parts of two Psalms contained in Book II. Comparing Psalm 108:1-5 with 57:7-11 and 108:6-13 with 60:5-12,

Read the Psalm.

(2) Read Psalm 109, on the recurrent theme.

(3) Psalm 110 contains two passages on which New Testament Messianic doctrines are based: verse 1, quoted by Jesus (Matt. 22:44) and again in Acts (2:34), and verse 4, which forms at least in large measure the basis of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Read Psalm 110.

(4) Psalm 118 contains a well-known passage made use of in the New Testament (verse 22) and the refrain "For his loving-kindness endureth forever," which refrain is even more recurrent in Psalm 136.

Read Psalms 118 and 136.

¶37. Psalm 119 is an acrostic, where, instead of a series of twenty-two lines or verses beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet, each stanza of eight verses begins each verse with the same letter, the twenty-two stanzas using successively the letters of the alphabet. It is a Psalm in praise of the law, emphasizing not the ritual or priestly,

but rather the legalistic, aspects. Here, rather than in the first Psalm* or the latter half of the nineteenth, is to be found the viewpoint of the ideal scribe who took his place in Judaism by the side of priest and wise man when the old-time prophecy had died out, or rather had divided and developed into apocalypticism and scribism, respectively. Now,

Read Psalm 119.

¶38. One of the most pathetic and beautiful of the Psalms is one from the Babylonian exile evincing a deep longing for the homeland and the temple, and reflecting the limitations of the Old Covenant. Comparing verses 8 and 9 with Acts 7:60 and verse 4 with Acts 16:25,

Read Psalm 137.

¶39. Read Psalms 138 and 140 to 144 on the main theme of the Psalter.

¶40. Psalm 139 is one of the great Psalms. It sets forth God's universal presence and knowledge and prays for divine searching and guidance. Another phase of the divine nature—what God does in his loving-kindness and goodness—is set forth in Psalm 145. The two supplement each other admirably.

Read Psalms 139 and 145.

¶41. The first of the two groups referred to in ¶36 is the Songs of Ascents, or Pilgrim Psalms as they probably are—songs of the pilgrimage or ascent to Jerusalem for worship. They form a beautiful series reflecting the joy of worship, the spirit of

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*As Briggs maintains.

thankfulness for divine deliverances, and a sense of trust in divine care and protection. Psalms 121, 127, 133, and perhaps also 122 have been general favorites in the Christian Church.

Read Psalms 120 to 134.

¶42. The Hallelujah Psalms.

(1) These Psalms are so named because they have the Hebrew phrase "Hallelujah," "Praise ye Jah,"[1] either at the beginning or the end or at both. There is some variation in the extent of this group in the various versions, the Septuagint or Greek version, for instance, making some "hallels" that are not so in the Hebrew.

(2) Psalm 104 praises Jehovah largely on the basis of his works in nature; 105 turns to his workings in history; 106 exhibits Jehovah's praiseworthiness in contrast with Israel's rebelliousness; and 107, which is not a "hallel" in the Hebrew or in the current English versions, builds itself around the refrain of verses 8, 15, 21, 31, and sets forth Jehovah's praiseworthiness under several aspects.

Read Psalms 104 to 107.

(3) The next group of hallels is Psalms 111 to 117.

Read these Psalms.

(4) Read Psalm 135, and sketch 136, which has already been studied in connection with its refrain.

Psalm 135 contains one of the most explicit attacks on idolatry found in the Psalms.

(5) It is fitting that the book of Psalms, after having traveled through the deeps of human expe-

[1]Jah is a shorter form of Jehovah or Yahweh.

rience and longing where the candle of faith burnt low, should end upon the heights of praise. The hallels, to change the figure, rise from mere statements of the rational grounds for praise in the earlier ones to what is in Psalm 150 a song without words, where the emotion and music of praise sounds like the close of a great oratorio. From the didactic assertion of the wisdom of righteousness in Psalm 1, through the shadows of doubt and the experiences of forgiven sin and simple trust to the heights of praise—what a journey! And how fitting it is to close a study of the prophecy, wisdom, and worship of the Old Testament with a study of that epitome of the best in religion, the Psalms! And how fitting that the Psalms should close with a final climax of praise! One might well remain with bowed head and heart in silent prayer and praise as he finishes this study by

Reading Psalms 146 to 150.

APPENDIX

BIBLIOGRAPHY

INSTEAD of presenting an elaborate list of authorities, it is deemed best to name a few books that might serve further to open up the treasures of the Old Testament. The following are, therefore, recommended for purchase, not in bulk, but two or three at a time. The others should be secured when the first have been read. These remarks do not apply to the commentaries, which might well be used for reference at the very beginning of the study of the "Outline." A genuine student should not read merely one side, but should endeavor to get as many viewpoints as possible, that he may be intelligent upon all aspects of Bible interpretation. One is not supposed to accept all one reads: he should read with a well-poised and discriminating mind.

ON THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE.

"The Bible: Its Origin and Nature." Dods. 75 cents.

ON OLD TESTAMENT CRITICISM.

Anticritical: "The Impregnable Rock of the Holy Scripture." Gladstone. 40 cents and $1.50. Or, "The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch." Green. $1.50.

Conservative: "The Problems of the Old Testament." Orr. $1.25.

Critical: "Old Testament Criticism and the Christian Church." McFadyen. $1.50.

ON THE PROPHETS.

By rather general consent, whether one agree with his conclusions or not, the best exposition of Old Testament

prophets is the four volumes by George Adam Smith in the Expositor's Bible, "Isaiah," Volumes I. and II., and "The Twelve Prophets," Volumes I. and II. $1 per volume.

In shorter compass, but good, and including all of the prophets, as Smith does not, is Kirkpatrick, "The Doctrine of the Prophets." $2.25.

More conservative, and covering not only the prophets but the other phases treated in the present volume as well, is Sampey's "Heart of the Old Testament." 60 cents.

ON OLD TESTAMENT WISDOM.

"The Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament." Davison. $1.

"The Hebrew Literature of Wisdom." Genung. $2.25.

ON THE PRIESTLY LITERATURE.

"The Problem of the Old Testament." Orr. $1.25.

"The Priestly Element in the Old Testament." Harper. $1.

ON THE PSALMS.

"The Praises of Israel." Davison. $1.

The volumes of Kirkpatrick in the Cambridge Bible and of Davison and Davies in the New Century Bible. $1 each.

COMMENTARIES IN SHORT COMPASS.

Conservative: Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown. Two volumes. $4.50.

Critical: Drummelow. One volume. $2.50.

COMMENTARIES FOR MORE ADVANCED STUDY.

Those quoted in the Outline: Adam Clarke, Pusey, the New Century Bible, the Cambridge Bible, and the International Critical Commentary.

For further bibliography see "The Best Books for Old and New Testament Study." Lamar & Barton. 20 cents.

Any or all of these books can be obtained from Lamar & Barton, Broadway and Ninth Avenue, Nashville, Tenn.; 1308 Commerce Street, Dallas, Tex.; or 900 East Broad Street, Richmond, Va. Write to nearest address for complete catalogue.

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